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Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly



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اسبوعية سياسية مستقلة

Prince Hassan and Peres attend signing ceremony in Aqaba today

## Jordan and Israel conclude signing of bilateral agreements

By Ahmad Shaker

**Special to The Star**  
ISRAELI PRIME Minister Shimon Peres will today, Thursday, arrive at Aqaba airport on an Israeli military helicopter to attend the signing ceremony of the last bilateral agreements under the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan will meet Mr Peres along with Prime Minister Shafiq Za'ed Ben Shaker and other high ranking officials.

Prince Hassan and Mr Peres will patronize the signing of the science, culture, telecommunications and maritime border, records agreed upon by officials in both countries. On Tuesday, Jordan and Israel signed the transport and aviation services agreement in Beit Jibrail in Lake Tiberias.

Thursday's signing ceremony will take place at Aqaba Port Staff Complex. Foreign Minister Abdel Karim Kabarini and his Israeli counterpart Yehud Barak will sign the science and culture accord, while Communications Minister Jamal Sarayreh and Mrs Shalom Aloni, his Israeli coun-

terpart, will sign the telecommunications accord. Gen. Tahseen Shurdom, chief of staff of the Jordanian Military Intelligence and Moshe Koshanovsky, legal adviser at the Israeli ministry of defence, will sign the maritime border accord. The Aqaba-Eilat agreement will be signed by Aqaba Governor Dr Fayez Al Khasawneh and the Israeli ambassador in Amman Shimon Shamir.

After the ceremonies, Prince Hassan and Prime Minister Peres will deliver two speeches assessing the peace process and bilateral relations under the peace treaty. They will also evaluate the importance of the coming phases in the peace process.

So far after that, all participants in the ceremonies will set out to Eilat for a dinner hosted by Prime Minister Peres in honor of Prince Hassan and his 250 member delegation of officials, diplomats and press.

Tuesday's Tiberias agreement on transport was signed by Minister of Transport Sameer Kawa and his Israeli counterpart Yisrael Kessar. Under the agreement, citizens in

both countries will be able to travel to each country in their private vehicles as of 15 February. As far as public transport buses, these are scheduled to begin their trip within 90 days from the date of signing the accord; while the first flight will be operated within 45 days of signing the agreement. The national airlines in both countries will operate five weekly flights between Amman and Tel Aviv.

The transport accord allows the entry and transit passage of travellers and their baggage from both countries. Private vehicles will also be allowed to enter the two countries upon obtaining an entry permission at the crossing point. The same is applied to public transport and tourist buses, provided the route between two cities or points of embarkment and disembarkment are defined. Cargo and shipment trucks in transit to a third country and between the two countries will be fixed by schedules, except Jordanian trucks which are allowed to go directly to Israeli ports for loading or discharging of Jordanian goods. The same is applied to Israeli trucks and their

access to Aqaba port for the same purpose. The agreement stresses the development of two railway lines: one connecting Haifa to Irbid and Mafrqa across the Sheikh Hussein Bridge in the Jordan Valley; while the second will connect the two countries' potash factories on the Dead Sea, with the ports on the Mediterranean and Red Sea through Wadi Araba.

As for the designation of borders, the two sides laid down, in June 1995, the land marks along a 220 kilometer long border, in the southern part of the country.

In August 1995, Israel and Jordan signed an agreement in Aqaba on their bilateral cooperation in the field of energy and geology, including the development of local energy resources, exploration of natural gas, solar energy and wind energy generation, and protection of the environment, geophysics and seismology.

At the Um Qais Rest House, the two countries signed in late August 1995 an agreement on cooperation in the field of medical and health care, including

the exchange of information, especially in modern medical equipment and technology, and the pharmaceutical industry.

In the field of ecology, the two sides signed in Aqaba in September of last year an agreement on cooperation and joint assessment of the ecological impact of industrial and agricultural projects and services. The agreement stipulates the joint monitoring of pollution, preservation of nature and its different elements; observing the discontinuation of water, air and soil, and combating desertification.

The Jordanian and Israeli police services agreement, signed in Beit Jibrail last October, calls for cooperation to combat crime and drug trafficking.

The two sides also signed an accord on trade, at the Plaza Hotel on the Israeli side of the Dead Sea in October of last year, which constituted a point of departure for economic cooperation between the two countries. Under this agree-

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Un vote décisif pour les Palestiniens

A LIVE p. 12 dans LE JOURDAIN

## Arafat likely to prosper as Hamas dodges vote

Yet the Islamic movement, whose charter calls for war to wrest "every inch of Palestine," from the Jewish state, vacillated for months on whether to sponsor candidates and suspend the suicide bombings that killed dozens of Israelis since the self-rule accord was signed.

By Barton Gelman

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

JABALIYA, Gaza Strip—Until a couple of weeks ago, Enad Falouji was by any measure a leading figure in Hamas. He represented the group at public events, edited its official newspaper and, as far as any outsider could tell, participated in Hamas decision-making.

Today Falouji is disdained as a turncoat by Hamas spokesman Mahmoud Zohar, his newspaper closed and his expulsion from the Islamic Resistance Movement—Hamas's full name—declared by leaflet.

The reason is visible just about anywhere in the streets of this north Gaza neighborhood. Large color posters proclaim Falouji's candidacy for the Palestinian legislative council to be elected to govern the Gaza Strip and areas of the West Bank where Palestinian self-rule has been established. Falouji is running even though Hamas decided not to do so.

The new council would not exist but for an agreement negotiated between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, and that is still anathema to Hamas.

Yet the Islamic movement, whose charter calls for war to wrest "every inch of Palestine," from the Jewish state, vacillated for months on whether to sponsor candidates and suspend the suicide bombings that killed dozens of Israelis since the self-rule accord was signed.

When Hamas hard-liners, most of them abroad, finally vetoed a draft deal with PLO leader Yasser Arafat's Palestinian National Authority, Falouji and a handful of other local Muslim militants rebelled.

The long flirtation with compromise, and the splintering of the movement in its aftermath, reflect the dilemma that the

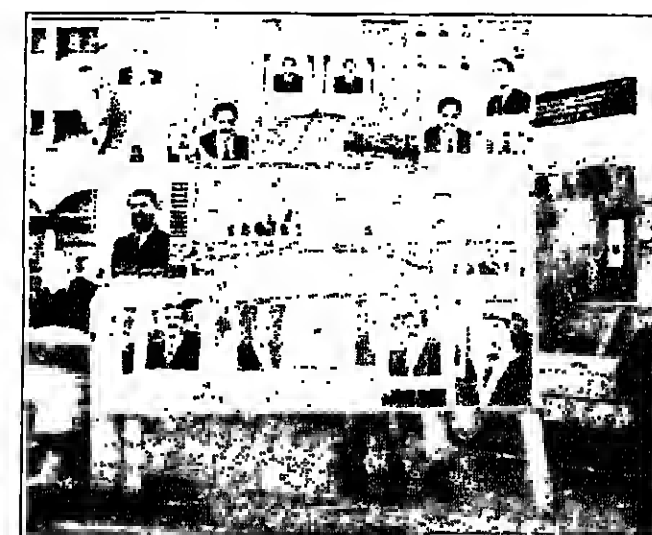
first popular ballot in Palestinian history presents for Hamas. "Everyone knows most of our people agree to these elections, and there is great popular support for the idea of a vote," Falouji said, with two armed guards nearby, in the campaign headquarters he fashioned from a warehouse of his family's soda distributorship. "The Islamic opposition must have some power, and that means it must have some members inside the new council."

Hamas is not in the election, but neither is it completely out. Not only do Falouji and a few like-minded apostates account for a handful of the nearly 700 candidates for 88 legislative seats, but the Hamas mainstream promised Arafat not to boycott or disrupt the balloting.

Most of its natural constituents are likely to vote, and Hamas is committed to recognizing the resulting council as the legitimate lawmaking body.

Had Hamas run a full slate of candidates, evidence suggests it would have fared badly. Its 10 percent support in recent opinion polls would translate into even fewer seats because of complex electoral

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## Jordanian farmers driven to despair by falling prices, lack of markets

By Raed Al Abed

Star Staff Writer

DEIR ALA—His fate was to be born a farmer, to till the earth with his blood and sweat. His dry face and watery eyes long for the comfort of sleep as he waits for someone to bring him out of his despair. He gave up everything for the land. He feeds so many mouths, but his mouth and those of his children taste only the bitter sweet salt of the soil. Now, he stands alone. "Tell them to stop showing food ads on TV," farmer Mohamed Mufleh, shouts. "I cannot satisfy the needs of my children. I spent all my savings, and now I lost everything."

The Jordan Valley is where hard-working farmers and modern technology have helped to create Jordan's food basket. The valley is home to more than quarter of a million, of whom 95 percent live on agriculture. But it is not a story with a happy ending. Most small sized farmers are facing a serious crisis. The

drop in produce prices, diminishing markets, mounting debt problems, and the increase in production costs have all conspired to bankrupt what was once the pride of the local economy, the Jordanian farmer. The Jordan Valley could soon be declared a disaster area if the authorities do not move to alleviate the conditions of farmers.

Over-production and lack of foreign markets for the agricultural yield have forced farmers to sell their produce on side roads. "It is no use delivering goods to the Central Market in Amman because prices do even not cover our production cost," said Mamdouh Adwan, chairman of the Jordan Valley Farmers Association (JVFA). "They calculate production cost, from harvesting to market delivery,

but they ignore 100 days of farm labor, therefore produce prices are below the actual production cost."

The eight-kilogram box of tomatoes is sold to merchants for 300 fils, while retailers



sells one kilogram of tomatoes for 120 fils.

As agricultural requirements, seeds, fertilizers, and insecticide costs have increased by 300 percent in recent years, production prices

have fallen dramatically. In addition to last year's hike in water rates from six fils to 35 fils per cubic meter, labor wages have doubled in the last few years.

"The rise in the cost of production compared to the decrease in prices has driven us into the poverty trap," said Ibrahim Hazam, a farmer.

"The Government must cancel the regulated prices of produce (which are set daily). These neither serve the consumer, nor the farmer, only the retailers," said Mr Rakan El Faour, the general manager of JVFA. "The Government must float prices, and establish rural markets."

JVFA believes the Government should work for the industrialization of agricultural produce. "Such is one solution for the problem of agricultural over-production," said Adwan.

Statistics provided by the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA)

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## Thousands of butterflies die

By Molly Moore

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

EL ROSARIO, Mexico—High on the snow-capped ridges of the central Mexican highlands, thousands of tiny orange-and-black corpses litter the ground, their lacy wings in tatters and their velvety black bodies crumpled.

Above the melting snow, tens of thousands of surviving monarch butterflies cling to fir branches in mammoth clumps of orange to autumn wings, seeking warmth in a mass of fragile bodies.

The plight of the migrating monarchs—roughed on by rare snows in their Mexican winter resting grounds—has sent Mexico into an uproar, stirring widespread hand-wringing and an acrimonious debate among environmentalists from three nations over the extent of the disaster.

"Butterflies are falling from the trees," said Homero Aridjis, leader of the Group of 100, a Mexican environmental lobbying organization that first reported the monarch kills and estimates that as much as 35 percent of the winter population—about 20 million butterflies—have died in an unusual cold snap during the past week. "This is just devastating."

But the Mexican government, weary

of bad economic news, has tried to play down the monarch kill as one of its most popular natural tourist attractions enters the high season.

Government agencies, and some private groups that have sent investigators trekking into the butterfly sanctuaries 11,000 feet up the rugged mountains 100 miles west of Mexico City, place the snow-related death toll at somewhere between 10 percent and 15 percent of the monarch population.

The fragile creature is a ubiquitous symbol of summer in gardens across the United States—and an important barometer of environmental degradation across three countries.

In recent years monarch populations have been diminished by agricultural pesticides that poison the flowers on which they feed, deforestation of their mating grounds, pollution and urbanization.

Even without the man-made problems, the life of a monarch has never been easy. Some years, in some sanctuaries, birds gobble up to 40 percent of the butterflies, according to Juergen Hoth, a butterfly expert for the World Wildlife Fund.

"And that's only birds," said Hoth. "Then you have to add mice. Then you have to add winter ... and exhaustion and the depletion of food."

But, Hoth said the unusual snow kills this year are worrisome.

"Butterflies seem to cope with large reductions in population," he said. "We don't know how large, however."

Long before the advent of continental free trade, the monarch butterfly has been freely making the 3,100-mile trip from Canada,

through the United States to the mountains of central Mexico, requiring up to five generations of butterflies to complete the round trip.

New generations of butterflies often return to the same tree as their parents and grandparents, according to scientists. But in recent years, population growth, logging and agriculture have eaten away at the wintering grounds of the monarchs in central Mexico and the southern United States. Under pressure from environmental groups, the Mexican government a decade ago designated five monarch sanctuaries in the high elevations of the fir forests in the state of Michoacan.

Even so, illegal logging continues in the forests, and villagers have planted



corn and other crops in the buffer zones surrounding the sanctuaries, depleting the tree cover that serves as umbrella-like protection for the butterflies.

"It is like punching holes in their blankets," said Aridjis, the Group of 100 leader, who grew up in a village near the monarchs' wintering grounds where he developed a special affinity for the butterflies.

The melting snows from this past week's storm—which occur only about twice a decade in this region of Mexico—have left rivers of mutilated monarch wings, bodies and broken antennae on the forest floor. Injured

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## Indo-Jordan Trade Promotion Week Opportunities await Jordanian businessmen

By Harry Pullens

Special to The Star

JORDANIAN-INDIAN commercial relations are set for a radiant future as the Indian Embassy in Amman launches its first ever Indo-Jordan Trade Promotion Week.

The Trade Promotion Week is expected to serve as a further step for business promotion in trade, investment, technology transfer, services and other industrial sectors to the benefit of both countries.

"The week is aimed at creating a greater awareness among the business community in Jordan about the existing potential of fruitful trade cooperation with their Indian counterparts," Sanjay Panda, second secretary and commercial attaché at embassy told The Star.

The event seeks to facilitate business contacts and identify avenues for possible joint ventures and expansion of bilateral trade agreements.

"Indo-Jordan trade promotion is governed by Trade and Economic Agreements signed by both nations in 1976," says Panda. There has been a tremendous response by the Jordanian business community, and "we are highly impressed to see the high level of interest in doing business in India."

A high-level business delegation from the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) visited the Kingdom last September. As a result, a Joint Business Council (JBC) Agreement and Cooperation Agreement were signed with the Amman Chamber of Industry and Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce. On-going trade promotion is also expected to further consolidate signed agreements.

"Since the peace treaty signed between Jordan

and Israel, we have viewed Jordan as a future business center in the region," said the official. Expressing thanks to the visionary policy of His Majesty King Hussein and his commitment to a peace, he pointed out that, with similar developments on the Syrian/Lebanese and Israeli tracks, and the lifting of sanctions against Iraq, Jordan will be able to fulfill such a role.

During the Trade Promotion Week, which ends on 20 January, information brochures entitled "Doing Business in India" are distributed by the embassy's commercial wing. These provide information on the process of economic liberalization pursued by the India since 1991, and give insight into the opportunities offered by Indian industry and trade.

Jordanian businessmen visiting the center are given access to the computerized data-base on Indian trade and industry.

The policy changes effected in India since 1991 are designed to attract greater investment. They are also aimed at encouraging technology transfer between Indian and foreign companies.

"As the 10th largest industrialized nation in the world we have so much to offer a country like Jordan. Since we embarked on the process of trade liberalization in 1991, there has been remarkable progress. We subscribe to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)," he said. "All the best products in the world are now being marketed in India, and products made in India have reached international standards. Some of the competitive advantages India has to offer in the international markets are its cheap labor, abundant manpower and vast natural resources," says Panda.

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# JORDAN

## W E E K

An unconventional report on Jordanian news and views edited by Awni Abu Ghosh



### Dutch PM calls for bolstering ties with Jordan

His Majesty King Hussein received at the Royal Court, Sunday, the Prime Minister of the Netherlands Wim Kok. They discussed the Middle East peace process, and bilateral economic cooperation. Accompanied by his Foreign Minister Hans Van Mierlo, Mr Wim Kok inaugurated his country's embassy in Amman. Before his departure to the West Bank and Gaza, the Dutch Prime Minister told journalists that the Netherlands will exert efforts to bolster its ties with Jordan in the economic, political, and investment fields. He added that Jordan plays a leading role in accomplishing a just peace in the region, and in creating a European-Middle Eastern partnership. Mr Kok also met Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and the Speakers of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament. The Dutch Prime Minister and his wife paid a short visit to the ancient city of Jerash before their departure. King Hussein decorated Mr Kok with Al Nahda Medal.

### The press under wraps!

It could be argued that 1995 was a bad year for the press. Newspapers closures were followed by detention of journalists, most of whom were from the local weekly press. This gloomy picture is likely to continue. However, only time will tell. What is known is that a

most likely restrictive press and publication law awaits us in 1996. It is with this background, that the trial of Salam Nemat, the London-based *Al Hayat* journalist, opens today, Thursday. He, together with the chief editor of the newspaper Mr Jihad Al Khan, are being taken to court for publishing material implicating

Jordanian journalists of accepting bribes from Iraq during the Gulf War.

On another level, the case of the *Al Majd* Chief Editor, Mr Fahd Al Rimawi continues to be heard in court. He is being charged with publishing a story from a Bahraini opposition leader calling for the expulsion of the Briton Ian Henderson from the Bahraini security services. The court case has caused an outcry among prominent lawyers and activists taking up the case. Seen as an issue of public liberties, former ministers Hani Al Khasawneh and Ibrahim Izzid are taking part in the hearing. What is interesting is that Mr Al Rimawi is being charged with an obscure law that was placed on the statute books in the 1960s, but was never used till the present case. Critics argue that it was not even used during the

relations with the enemy that has exceeded even the ending of the state of war and hostility to a state of coordination and cooperation. It goes on to say that, "the repercussions and agreements resulting from such a visit will deprive the Palestinian negotiators from using many important cards" in their negotiations. The statement also states that the "visit constitutes a mechanization of the Zionist medical establishment at the expense of our own." Hence, "we wonder how Jordan can then be able to promote our own medical institutions, which are among the best investment enterprises on the Jordanian and Arab levels, after that appraisal of the enemy's medical and treatment services."

The statement regrets the inclusion of a number of Jordanian deputies in the visiting group.

### Tuyoor Al Hathar to be allowed

Tuyoor Al Hathar, by Ibrahim Nasrallah, will be allowed to enter the country. The Director of the Press and Publication Dept., (PPD) Mr Mohammad Amin said that the novel was given the go-ahead about two weeks ago. He told *Ad Dustour* that Nasrallah was already notified of his department's decision. He said that one of the reasons for last week's media hype about the refusal of the PPD to allow publication was engineered by the author and the publisher who wanted to market the novel.

### UNRWA's new secretary general

UNRWA is to have a new Commissioner-General. The Danish Peter Hansen will replace Ilter Turkmen in the office expiring early this month. Mr Hansen officially takes over on 20 January. A specialist in international relations, Mr Hansen has a lot of experience in refugee issues. His present post as UN Assistant Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs will be invaluable as he takes over one of the biggest UN organizations. He will be responsible for carrying out a number of crucial decisions, one of which includes the movement of the UNRWA headquarters from Vienna to Gaza.

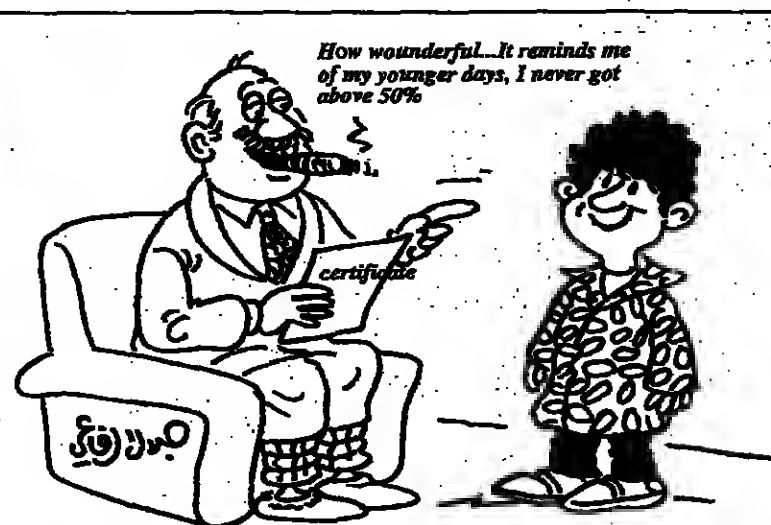
### New election law— who cares?

Informal consultations and information gathering have started in the Lower House on the new election law which the Government is about to present for discussion. *Ad Dustour* daily said that earlier this week a meeting was held in the Prime Ministry where the exchange of views on the different aspects of the draft was presented. The newspaper added that another informal meeting was also convened in the office of the Speaker of the Lower House with the participation of deputies from the different political spectrums. The participating deputies in these unofficial exchanges were unanimous on having a modern and civilized election law to replace the existing one which is based on the principle of 'one man, one vote'. Speaker Sa'ed Hayel Srour was keen on these consultations to meet the deputies from different political orientations individually and in groups, so that the ideas presented could be freed from any kind of emotional or factional pressure.

It is high time for the current deputies, who were elected in accordance with the 'one man, one vote' law, to start their due debate on such an important law. A country of political pluralism and democracy badly needs an efficient and up-to-date law which copes with these serious developments.

### Hashd calls for no confidence vote

A Hashd delegation headed by the party's Secretary Salem



### Prevention, deterrence, then treatment

The Ministry of Administrative Development has completed its report and recommendations on combating corruption. The ministry's conclusions have been deduced from the working papers presented to its two-day seminar (November '95), a follow-up workshop of general secretaries and deputy ministers, and from experiences of other countries facing the same problem. The 'national strategy of combating corruption' is now in the hands of the Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker for consideration before enacting the recommendations included. The recommendations outline three main dimensions: prevention,

deterrence, and treatment. The ministry's document includes proposals of updating a package of existing regulations and the method of the judiciary in dealing with corruption cases. The draft strategy suggests the introduction of a 'moral code'—similar to that of the medical doctors and lawyers associations— which the public civil servant would pledge to abide by. It also proposes the setting up of a special department of corruption investigation to be associated with the Ministry of Justice or the High Judiciary Council. This department will develop measures to promote the role of the prosecution in dealing with such crimes.

Al Nahas met the Committee of Public Freedoms of the Lower House this week, and handed over a memorandum on the gross violations of public freedoms in the country. The delegation also explained the implications of the case taken against Hashd to the court by the Interior Ministry. The delegation presented a special document on this issue, and demanded a vote of no confidence against the minister concerned.

### Jordanian workers abroad

There are 200,000 Jordanians who work in other Arab countries according to a recent study by the Ministry of Labor. The figures up to 1993 show that there are also 75,000 Jordanians who work in foreign countries. Many factors account for this but the most important is unemployment. The majority of Jordanian workers, according to the study, are in Saudi Arabia (158,000), while there are 34,000 workers in the United States.

### New airline company is going places

A new airline company is to be set up very shortly to cater for the new influx of tourists from the surrounding countries. This is expected to gather momentum as we enter the new peace era. The new company will have its base in Amman's Civil Airport in Marka and it will go to such short destinations as Aqaba, Tel Aviv and other regional airports.

But this is indeed exciting news. A new airline, no matter how small it is, will be a welcome competition to Royal Jordanian which has always monopolized the air routes to this country, and has managed to make a loss.

The Civil Airport is presently being equipped with a new 19,000 square meter hall at a cost of JD 380,000. The General Manager of the airport, Mr Rashid Abu Said said that they are waiting for the

first 50-seat Dash 8 airplanes.

### How Israel views cultural relations

Among other agreements with Israel a convention on cultural relations between Jordan and Israel is likely to be signed. According to *Al Bilad* weekly, the recent official visit of His Majesty King Hussein to Tel Aviv gives impetus to such an accord. It added that the Israeli side wishes the Jordanian side ensure the free access of the citizens of both countries to religious and historical places, as well as unconditional visits and mutual performances of those visitors on both sides.

Al Bilad said that the Israelis have also asked Jordanian officials to remove racial and ideolo-

logical discrimination terms from the Jordanian cultural vocabulary and the curricula of the Jordanian Ministry of Education, especially those terms associated with Zionism, racism and occupation. Moreover, the Israeli side insisted that the Jordanian side should take all the legal and administrative measures that ban anti-Israeli propaganda by any organization or individual, and the abolition in Jordan of all platforms or societies which are adamant in their hostility to Israel. The point is, doesn't that obviously manifest Israel's hostility to certain Jordanian structures? Does Israel accept to apply at home the same request vis-a-vis the Jewish organizations which are hostile to the Palestinian and other Arabs?

### Dr Majali observes Palestinian elections

Senator and former prime minister Dr Abdel Salam Majali left this week for the PNA areas at the head of an official Jordanian delegation to take part in the international monitoring team of the first election of the Palestinian council in the West Bank and Gaza strip.

In Jericho, Dr Majali told reporters in regard to a possible Jordanian-Palestinian confederation that "we are waiting for the Palestinian brothers to be able to say their word." He added that Jordan would welcome any close relations with the Palestinians, but the people of the two countries must decide on the form of such relations. Majali is confident that tolerance will prevail in the region, and its peoples will live in freedom and democracy once there a breakthrough is achieved on the Israeli-Syrian-Lebanese tracks.



Dr Majali

### Jordan and Israel sign bilateral agreements

Continued from page 1

Jordan attained customs reductions on its exports to the Israeli market, while other goods were fully exempted from duties.

Last October, Jordan and Israel signed an agricultural agreement which underlined the preparation and execution of agricultural watering projects, and joint

agricultural watering projects. According to this agreement, Jordan shall enjoy preferential status in exporting fresh agricultural produce to Israel, once the latter decides to import such goods. These products will also be customs exempt. The agreement also provides for the launching of joint agricultural projects.

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### Jordanian farmers driven to despair by falling prices, lack of markets

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show that the agricultural sector only contributes eight percent of the GNP. It makes up 19 percent of exports, employs 7.4 percent of the labor force—the majority of workers are from other Arab nationalities—and feeds nearly 22 percent of the country's population. The Jordan Valley produces 90 percent of the country's vegetable needs.

The Jordanian farmer is a dying breed. We ask the Government to exempt farmers from their accumulated debts which are estimated at JD 65 million. This will help farmers to get back on their feet," Adwan said.

"If not total exemption, we demand the Government to implement residual debts on a long-term basis for farmers," Adwan said.

Administrative council members of the JVFA suggested that the council should ask the JVA to lift laws that ban selling agricultural land. This proposal, they say, should help indebted farmers cover their basic needs.

"Farmers are feeding the people for free. Food security is equivalent to national security, and defending the farmer is more important than defending the consumer," Faouri said.

Finding new Arab or foreign markets, and facilitating measures for exporters will help farmers to sell their goods, and relieve them of the problems of the local market.

"Our problem is a political one, if Syria closed its borders, for example, we can not sell our goods, and this also applies to the Gulf states," Adwan said. "It is the Government's duty to find new external markets, we have good quality produce to promote."

"Our officials were invited to international conferences on agriculture, but they didn't take anyone from the concerned sector; neither did they promote our products," farmer Moussa Aydi said. "We welcomed the peace treaty because we relied on it to bring prosperity to this sector. Unfortunately, peace failed to satisfy the needs of the people of this valley."

"The cost of production requirements are floating, which turns the market into something like the black market. There must be a parallel market to save farmers," said Al Aydi. "They are looking towards a greener Jordan in the year 2000. Unfortunately, the situation drives him to leave his land, more of which is becoming into pastures."

The JVFA needs to be supported so that its role can be enhanced. "The JVFA is bankrupt, we sent an appeal to the Prime Minister to finance us with JD 3 million, so we can resume our role," said Adwan.

### CLASSIFIEDS

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## Arafat likely to prosper as Hamas dodges vote

Continued from page 1

ance of the Palestinian political scene.

Arafat's new resilience was clear as he rode out the assassination, nearly under his nose, of a Hamas bomb-builder long wanted by Israel.

The death by booby-trapped telephone of Yehiya Ayash, assumed by nearly everyone to be Israel's work, could have been a major embarrassment for Arafat just 15 days before the vote. But he merely issued a mild denunciation and instructed his forces to tell Hamas the funeral rally had better not blame him. It did not, however, a Hamas statement quoted by news services accused senior PLO police officers of assisting Israeli intelligence "in finding out the location of the martyr Ayash. ... This is a warning to people, so be warned."

A similar assassination in November 1994 severely tested Arafat's grip on power. Hamas and the more militant Islamic Jihad blamed Arafat's "puppet regime" when Islamic Jihad activist Hani Abed died in a booby-trapped car.

Street rallies in Abed's memory verged on rebellion. Arafat paid a condolence call at Abed's mosque but had to flee an angry crowd and lost his trademark kaffiyeh in the melee.

In the intervening 14 months, and particularly the last three, the peace deal with Israel has begun to bear conspicuous fruit. Since September, Arafat has paraded triumphantly through West Bank cities from which Israel withdrew after 28 years of occupation. He has built a patronage system that directly supports about a third of Gaza's population—and that denies crucial benefits to opponents. A security crackdown, brutal at times, has given Arafat's police control over what Hamas clerics say in Friday sermons in their mosques. ■



● Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor, Monday, planting trees to mark the Ann Arbor Day celebrations at the Al Hashemite University in Zerga. The celebrations, organized by the Ministry of Agriculture are part of the effort of making Jordan green by the year 2000. This year, the ministry will plant about six million tree saplings. The celebrations also underline Jordan's commitment to the protection of the environment.

Hamzi Moghrabi of ADC

## 'The US Constitution is the contract we have with America once we became its citizens'

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Mr. Hamzi Moghrabi is the Chairman of the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee. He succeeds the long-term president and founder of the ADC, James Abourezk. Mr. Moghrabi has long been an active member of the ADC, serving as a chapter president for Colorado. He talked to *The Star's* Marwan Asmar and Lubna Khan while in Amman.

Could you give us a brief structure of the ADC?

The ADC is a civil rights organization in the US that protects Arab-Americans from discrimination and stereotyping. It started in 1980. The ADC is open to all Arab-American regardless of which country they come from or what religion they are or their political affiliation. It is an umbrella organization that is open to all Arabs who immigrate to the United States. It has a board of directors, and 75 chapters in the US with a membership of more than 30,000.

The difference between the ADC and other Arab-American organizations is that other organizations exclude people like for instance village-based or city-based organizations or country-based organizations such as the Ramallah Federation, The Lebanese and Palestinian societies also exclude other people who are not of the same origin. ADC is an inclusion organization catering for all Arab-Americans from different walks of life. The only thing we believe in is that the US Constitution is the contract we have with America once we became citizens of that country. We have obligations, and at the same time we have rights. We sense no one is going to relieve us from our obligations and no one should deny us our rights. This is the basic existence of the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee.

Some people have criticized the ADC for appealing to a certain strata of the Arab-American community. What do you say to that?

That is not true. But the issues are there. Some people say we are a Lebanese club, which we are not. We happen to have issues with the problems in Lebanon. So we cater for those. Some people accuse us of being a Palestinian organization; only catering for Palestinians. There is a Palestinian issue which we have to cater for, we cater for Egyptian, Tunisian, Moroccan, and Yemeni issues.

The focus sometimes is mainly on the issues that are burning at the time. Take for instance the ban on travel to Lebanon. No one should deny me the right to visit Lebanon. It is my constitutional right. Take for instance the case of the eight Palestinians who were accused of belonging to the communist party about eight years ago. They were going to be deported because they were accused of belonging to the PFLP. We interfered and we won the case. Last month I sent a letter to President Clinton not to appeal the case, because it is a consi-



Hamzi Moghrabi

national right. Sometimes, the problems belong to certain group of people. We protected Kuwaitis and Palestinians during the Gulf War. But we don't interfere in the politics of the Arab world. We support the civil rights of Arabs wherever they are.

But you support them in the United States...

We support them in the States to formulate an American foreign policy that should focus on protecting the civil rights of Arabs wherever they are in their bilateral relations with the country they are in.

**We have obligations, and at the same time we have rights. We sense no one is going to relieve us from our obligations and no one should deny us our rights.**

Are you working with other organizations?

We are working with Hispanic, oriental, civil rights groups, activists... We make alliance on issues, with a group of people that supports us or with whom we have common interests on these issues.

Is there an Arab lobby to counteract the Jewish lobby?

There is no question, there is an organized Jewish community that is focused on one thing only and that is Israel. The Arab-Americans don't have a focus. We came from different countries, have our bias and our political associations. What we are trying to do is let Arab-Americans focus on American issues and help their countries of origin by formulating a foreign policy in the US.

It so happens that wherever we are stepping, we are beating the Jewish lobby, because their lobby is based on lies, on our absence and on our emotional reactions, because when ever we react, we react emotionally so that the image we give is that we are the angry Americans who come to protest, who come to court, and accuse people of being anti-Arab or anti-Zionist and so on. But we don't really present a case that is acceptable to the minds of law-makers or in the minds of the American community. What ADC does is that we formulate our case and don't go out and accuse anyone. As a result, we find that doors are open for us. I am not saying that we succeeded in all cases. The Arab-American community still needs to recognize its identity. We are Americans of Arab origin. We are working on a project for the year 2000, because we don't exist as Arabs to the official register in the United States. In the census of the year 2000, we are by law allowed to declare heritage. We want to declare heritage by saying we are Arab-Americans. That means we will have a number, that may be 2 to 3 million, which makes a lot of difference. Because if we have this identity we can speak on political issues, social issues, we can

elect our representatives... then politically and socially we would be listened to, we have achieved a lot so far, we got about 75,000 Arab-Americans who declared heritage in 1990; we want 3 million.

On foreign policy, what has the influence of the ADC been?

There is a lot that has happened. The State Department, for instance, used to hear only the position of Arab leaders. They didn't listen to people; we meet now on a monthly basis with the state department to give them our positions on say the closure of the West Bank and Gaza - this is against international law, this is mass punishment, this is not acceptable. So we attract the attention of the State Department and the President. They never heard a protest except coming from Arab countries and Arab leaders. Now Arab-Americans are the grass roots who are asking them to formulate their policies. Aid to Israel, aid to Palestine, aid to Jordan, travel ban to Lebanon, all these are issues that we are taking with the administration to formulate a policy. We are now countering the Jewish lobby in telling (the administration) what we as Arab-Americans want (US) foreign policies to be for the Arab world. ■

## Women's rights are essential for development

By Oroub Al Abed  
Special to The Star

AS PART of the efforts of The National Environmental Information and Education Program (NEIEP) for the promotion of environmental awareness, the Jordan Environment Society and Friedrich Naumann Foundation have just organized a two-day seminar at the Regency Hotel. The seminar, entitled "The Beijing Women's Conference and its Repercussion on Jordan" aimed at promoting the role of women and enhancing their participation in sustainable development by increasing their productivity, providing and expanding their means of education and family health care, and promoting equal opportunity. These subjects provided the basis for discussion between the participants that included representatives from women's organizations, NGO's, academic institutions, international agencies, political parties and professional unions. It tackled certain women's issues that focused on the conditions of women world-wide and their fight for their rights.

"We have just started to unite the efforts of women's movements in Jordan which is necessary to tackle the problem of rights from the roots," said Bushaina Jardaneh, president of the Professional and Vocational Women's Club. The women's movement is acting worldwide to stop the violation of women's rights and to achieve equality with men. But participants were at pains to point out that what they mean by equality is only their fair share and not absolute equality with men. "Whenever there is social change their will be always a conflict, but this conflict, especially between men and women, is passive and handled in a democratic manner," said Asma Khader the president of the Union of Jordanian Women. But participants differed on the current status and conditions of women in Jordan.

"I feel that the condition of women has largely improved within the customs and traditions of our culture," said lawyer Taghreed Hikmat from the The Jordanian National Congress of Women Committees (JNCW). "However we can't deny that there are remote areas where women need to be educated in the legal and health fields."

The women's movement is intensifying its effort to educate women about their rights and to teach them basic concepts like liberty and equality. The JNCW, which was initiated by HRH Princess Basma, is applying a work schedule all over the country, and is seeking to implement the resolutions of the Beijing Conference. The JNCW, as a semi-governmental organization, tries to coordinate the efforts of all governmental organizations and NGOs that are concerned with women's conditions. "Educating rural women is indispensable because they do not know their rights," said Ruby Asad from the National Committee of Agriculture. "Because of their direct relationship to the land, rural women have to know what types of insecticides to use because of their potential harmful effects on the environment," she added.

But these questions have come up at conferences year after year. Women, particularly in Jordan, have yet to define their rights on working practices and wages and other important issues. Unlike the West, these subjects are still undeveloped in this country, something that was demonstrated in the seminar. Asma Khader appealed to participants to discuss these issues. "We have progressed a lot of women's demands as compared with the past, nevertheless, there are numerous problems yet to be solved," she told *The Star*.

"In the recent debate on the budget, no one even dared to call for allocation of funds to improve the condition and status of women," Khader added.

Women are highly important in the family unit, yet without education, they cannot perform their duties effectively and can become a burden on the economy since they constitute half the population.

Poverty is seen as directly related to these issues, a fact widely acknowledged during the Beijing conference. The role of women in the development process is seen as crucial.

Health, violence, armed conflict and job discrimination were other topics that were discussed at the seminar. Participants stressed that governmental bodies and NGOs must cooperate to be able to create a more effective environment for the development of women and their contribution to society. ■

## Jeremy Dodson The American Marriott Hotel Champions Manager

Mr. Dodson studied Hotel & Catering Management in England. After graduation, he worked at London Marriott as Restaurant Supervisor, then moved to JW Marriott Century City, Los Angeles as Restaurant and Bar Manager. In 1991 he went back to London Marriott Grosvenor Square as Restaurant & Room Service Manager and in 1993 joined the Champions Marriott Hotel as food and Beverage Service Manager until his transfer to the Amman Marriott Hotel to assume his duties as Beverage Manager and in charge of the new Champions Restaurant.



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## THE WORLD PAPER

PRINTED IN FIVE LANGUAGES  
ON FIVE CONTINENTS

Global warming absorbs premiums as well as trapping heat

## Insurance industry hit by a storm front

Weather forecasts are famously inaccurate. So why believe that human activity is changing our climate? Many people in many countries do not. But the world's insurance industry, hit with billions of dollars in losses, is beginning to side with the believers

By George Palmer

IN LIFE, SO THE SAYING goes, there are only two certainties: death and taxes. Add a third: natural catastrophes that, like the Grim Reaper, strike without warning. Lives are lost, people injured, property destroyed, crops ruined, hopes dashed.

Hurricanes and tornadoes; droughts and floods; fires, hail, ice and snow. The vagaries of weather, climate change and the earthquake's tremor are intensively studied by governments, scientists and the world's US\$1.41 trillion insurance industry. The mysterious forces that change the earth's climate—and mankind's role in those changes—may one day be understood.

The omens are not exactly encouraging. Theories about the role human activities play in changing the world's climate are fiercely debated. Developing countries see them as rationales for limiting their economic growth. Yet the evidence supporting climatic change seems to be mounting.

According to the Insurance Services Office Inc. (ISO), four of the five most severe catastrophes in the 42 years to 1992 have been visited on the Americas since 1989. In that year Hurricane Hugo ran up insurance losses of \$3 billion. Five times worse was Hurricane Andrew in 1992, resulting in losses of \$15.5 billion. Had it hit Miami instead of Homestead, Florida, losses could have exceeded \$40 billion. Even so, it put seven insurers into insolvency. That

same year Hurricane Iniki left insured losses of \$1.6 billion in its wake and put Hawaii's largest insurer out of business. Had it struck Honolulu instead of Kauai, the bill would have been \$15 billion.

According to the Swiss Reinsurance Company, the Mississippi-Missouri flood during the summer of 1993 killed 49, left 66,000 homeless, caused \$5 billion of property damage, \$7 billion of crop failures and put 80,000 square kilometers of land under water. The following year there were severe storms

in January and April: cost \$1.5 billion. This year Hurricane Opal cost \$2.1 billion; a hail-storm in Texas \$1.1 billion; and Hurricane Marilyn left the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico with claims running to \$875 million.

On top of those pay-outs, over the past 10 years US government help to disaster-struck communities amounted to another \$50 billion.

Is there a pattern? Can these storms, floods and hurricanes be predicted? Do they run in cycles?

Dr Gerry Bell, a meteorologist with the Climate Prediction Center of the US National Weather Service, believes one of the primary causes of intense hurricane activity is a natural phenomenon. Known as El Niño, it is a periodic warming of the ocean in the central and east central equatorial Pacific that shifts strong tropical thunderstorm activity from Indonesia to that part of the Pacific. The warming affects the mean vertical wind shear and when that becomes weaker than normal, hurricanes

strengthen and multiply. This year the wind shear was weaker than normal and there were 11 hurricanes compared with 13 for the previous four years combined.

It's also been found that periods of intense hurricane activity correlate with alternating two-decade periods of comparatively wet cycles (more severe hurricanes) and dry cycles (fewer) in the semi-arid sub-Saharan region of West Africa.

Then there's a long-term global warming trend that seems to be aggravated by the accumulation of "greenhouse" gases, chiefly carbon dioxide from burning hydrocarbons, that trap solar heat. As the surface temperature of sea water rises above 80 degrees Fahrenheit, the area of warm water large enough to produce hurricanes grows bigger—by over 16 percent over the past 20 years. The result: longer hurricane seasons and more intense storms.

A study by Travelers Corp., a Hartford Connecticut-based insurer, suggests that just a 0.9 degree increase in average global temperature by 2010 would be enough to result in stronger winds, a third more hurricanes hitting the US coast, a three-week extension of the hurricane season and a 30 percent rise in US catastrophic losses.

As oceans warm and polar ice melts, the sea level rises and coastal flooding increases. Along the US Atlantic coast the sea level has risen a foot and is now at its highest for 5,000 years. Over the next 20 years it is expected to rise another 5.7-7.7 inches according to the



University of Maryland's Laboratory for Coastal Research.

So beaches will continue to erode exposing \$2 trillion of insured property along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts to damage. In the US half the population lives within 50 miles of a coastline. That's worrying enough. It could be much worse for the 240,000 inhabitants of the Maldives, 1,192 tiny islands in the Indian Ocean that average only one meter above sea level. They could disappear under water by mid-21st century.

Other researchers seeking explanations for climatic change focus on solar activity. They have found an 11-year pattern of low-pressure systems and winter storms over the North Atlantic that corresponds with the solar cycle. Shifts in weather patterns, they suggest, are linked to variations in the intensity of solar ultraviolet radiation. Ultraviolet rays are absorbed by stratospheric ozone, affect its temperature and create additional ozone. A hotter stratosphere changes the way huge atmospheric

waves are generated, thereby affecting cloud cover, winds and temperature at the earth's surface.

Not all scientists accept this hypothesis. Others suggest it's not ultra violet light but charged particles blowing from the sun past the earth that change the amount of cloud cover and thereby the climate over long periods.

Whatever the cause or causes of climatic change, they disturb the established rhythm of weather patterns and their predictability. The resulting bunching of catastrophes threaten the ability of the global insurance industry to settle claims expeditiously. In addition, the sudden surge in demand for materials and labor raises reconstruction costs above expected levels.

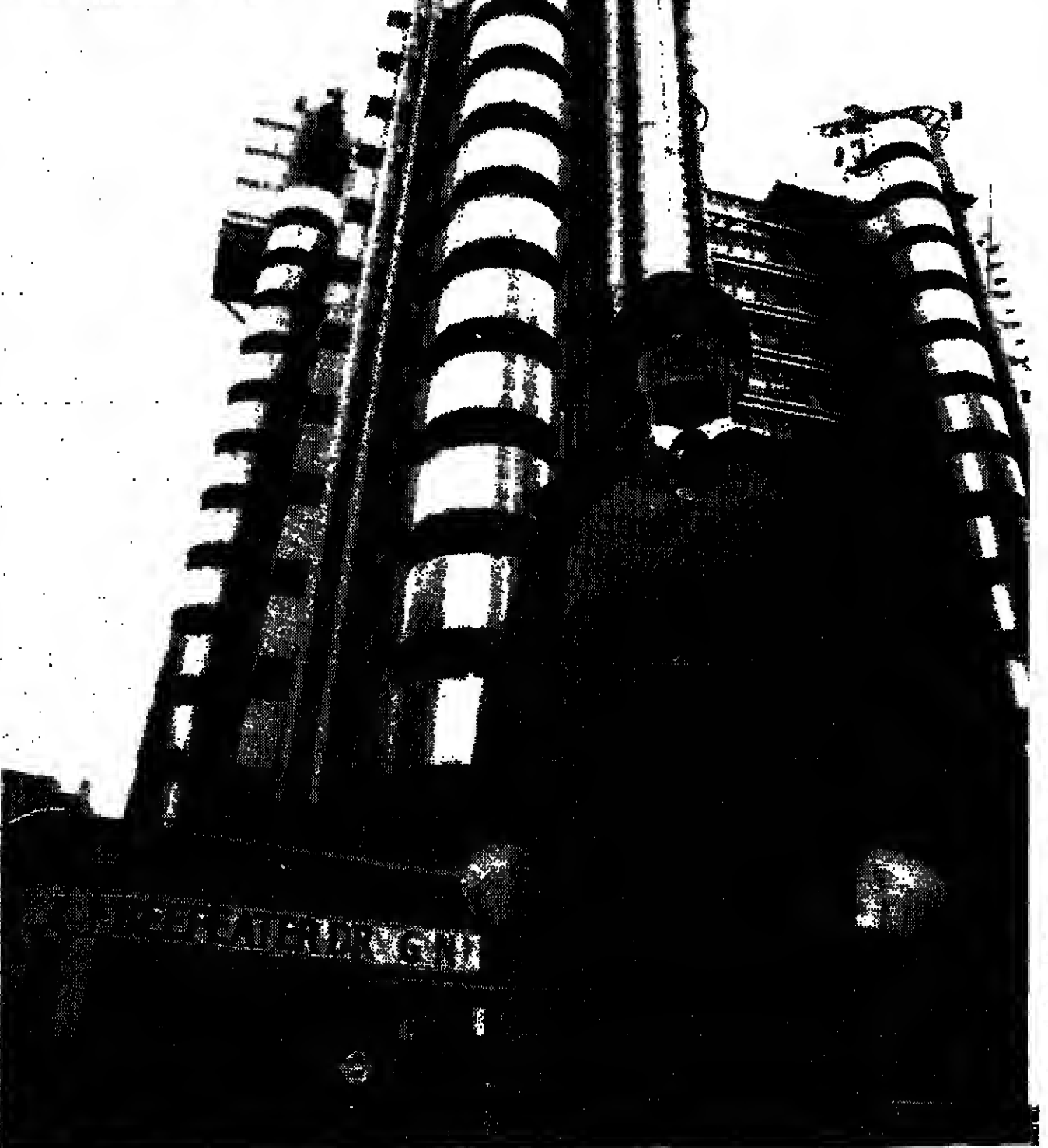
For its part, the insurance industry has added \$4.1 billion of reinsurance capacity. It is also limiting over-concentrated exposure in hurricane-prone (and earthquake-prone) areas. Computer programs have been developed to improve information systems for assessing underwriting risks and tracking the accumulation of exposure. More accurate estimates of potential catastrophe loss are achieved by linking long-term natural disaster information with current demographic information.

However, demographics are not reassuring. In the US in 1960 45 million people lived in hurricane-prone coastal areas. In 1990 there were 64 million. By 2010 the figure is expected to reach 73 million. Other countries are experiencing similar trends.

Despite the world insurance industry's \$160 billion in reserves, global warming could result in catastrophes that could bankrupt it. As risks increase, the cost of covering them obviously rises too, despite efforts to more accurately measure them. □

GEORGE PALMER, A FORMER EDITOR OF THE FINANCIAL MAIL IN SOUTH AFRICA, WRITES FROM LOS ANGELES ON FINANCIAL ISSUES.

A wind-proof structure? The Lloyd's Building in London home to an insurer that is still recovering from a series of natural and human disasters



Battered British insurance giant showing signs of recovery

## But 'long tail' still wags Lloyd's of London

By Alex Brummer

THE STORMS THAT raged through Europe and the Americas during the 1980s and 1990s did damage totalling billions of dollars.

Among the things in the path of these storms was Lloyd's of London, perhaps the insurance world's most widely recognized name.

In the course of several horrendous years, marked by a series of natural and manmade disasters ranging from Hurricane Hugo to the Exxon Valdez oil spill, the accumulated losses of the London insurance market have climbed to US\$12 billion. Claims related to policies covering pollution and asbestos are still being resolved—the infamous "long tail"—are still wreaking havoc among the individual investors, or Names, whose personal wealth underpinned Lloyd's for three centuries.

Today, it is finally possible to believe that Lloyd's is far enough along the road to recovery to remain a significant factor in the global insurance industry.

However, the restructured and reformed Lloyd's that emerges will be a very different creature from the free-wheeling, highly entrepreneurial and relatively unregulated market which shaped its character for three centuries. What is not clear is whether the new Lloyd's, when it is up and running, will be as innovative an insurance market as its predecessor; an innovativeness that gave the City of London and the commercial insurance companies based there an edge in the competitive area of global insurance services.

The new Lloyd's will be much more focused. It will be much more professional. And its underwriting capacity will be provided through corporate ve-

hicles, with limited liability, rather than the Names whose unlimited liability was the backbone of the market. As it turns out, this change may not be as significant as it appears. When push came to shove, there was a natural limit to the liability—as the current lawsuits prove, the market could not bankrupt the Names with impunity.

But Lloyd's is still a ways from being back on its feet. The recovery schedule was given a jolt two months ago when the architect of many of the reforms, Peter Middleton, suddenly decided to step down from his post and take on a more lucrative job as head of investment bank Salomon Brothers' European operations. By leaving so suddenly, Middleton has jeopardized the better relations Lloyd's had built up with the loss-making Names and the momentum for external, independent regulation of the market—something Middleton himself deemed vital to restoring confidence in Lloyd's at home and abroad.

For the reorganization of Lloyd's to be successful, several separate but related developments need to take place. Most importantly, the provisional settlement negotiated by Middleton with the rebellious Names—who have filed thousands of lawsuits against the insurance market—has to be concluded. Under the terms of this settlement, the Names would drop their lawsuits in return for some \$4 billion. It was originally expected that this settlement would be concluded by the end of 1995. Now, the new chief executive,

▶ LONG TAIL PAGE 2



Solutions favored by environmental groups seen as simplistic

# Japanese industry puts a premium on more income

By Mutsuho Kawashima

IT WAS A TYPHOON that never hit which really made Japanese insurers sit up and think about climate change.

Typhoon 12 arrived off the Japanese coast in the summer of 1995, and for a period it looked as if it would slam into metropolitan Tokyo. Though the storm passed offshore, Japanese insurance companies were left to ponder their costs if Tokyo had been hit. They also started to consider the trend of increasingly strong typhoons that has emerged in the past decade.

According to most estimates, if Typhoon 12 had swept through Tokyo, the bill for non-life insurers would have totaled a trillion yen. If the typhoon succeeded in breaching the banks of the Tone River north of Tokyo, the flooding could have displaced over one and a half million people, covered 555

REPORTING FROM TOKYO

square miles and pushed the bill to an unprecedented 7 trillion yen. In either case, Japan's non-life insurance industry would have faced bankruptcy.

They had already suffered a record-setting blow in 1991, when Typhoon 19 came ashore on September 27 and, in one night, left insurers with a bill that eventually totaled 560 billion yen. That bill was 17 times larger than the previous record, set the year before by another typhoon.

What especially concerns insurers is the growing frequency and intensity of the typhoons. Historically, a "mega-typhoon" hit Japan once every 30 to 40 years; in recent years that average has fallen to once every eight years. There has also been a 20 percent increase in the average intensity of these storms.

The cause of this change, most insurers agree, is global warming. Big companies are starting to alert government officials to the phenomenon, though to date their motivation is higher premiums rather than a change in the way the world does business.

International environmental groups have been warning insurers for some time that the build-up of "greenhouse gases" in the atmosphere, and the resulting change in climate, would come back to haunt them. Groups like Greenpeace and the Worldwatch Institute have been urging the insurance companies to use their investment portfolios to pressure manufacturing companies for a reduction in their output of carbon dioxide, methane and other greenhouse gases.

According to Tokyo Marine, Japan's largest non-life insurance company, Japanese insurers generally do not hold a sufficiently large share of any one company to be able, as an institutional investor, to impose their will. Global warming, they believe, will not be solved by Greenpeace's simple-minded approach.

Climate change, however, cannot be ignored. One likely response, according to Tokyo Marine, is to stop selling disaster insurance or withdraw from particularly vulnerable markets. This is the direction some US insurers have taken in the wake of Hurricane Andrew in 1992.

Currently, the main strategy is to gather sufficient information about typhoons and their likely paths in order to justify premium increases. Following Typhoon 19, the industry established a private research group, comprised of university experts and officials from relevant government ministries such as the Ministry of Construction, and tried to persuade the government to approve increased premiums. They secured a 7 percent increase, which is still low in light of possible losses from typhoons.

Working against this strategy is a long-term trend of decreasing premiums. In Japan, insurance for typhoon-related damage is tied to coverage for fires. Since World War II, improved fire-fighting technology has helped

lower those premiums. The public, now used to this happy state of affairs, is likely to resist any sharp increases—a political reality the government is aware of.

Japanese insurers are now considering a new strategy. By working with their US counterparts, they hope to give added weight to their arguments that, by improving the industry's ability to pay through premium increases, their respective governments will be less exposed to the need for expensive emergency aid packages. In the long run, they hope that by making the US and Japanese governments more and more worried about the dangers of global warming and changing weather, they can create a better environment for higher premiums. ☐

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## LONG TAIL

Continued from page 1

Ron Sandler, is saying that it will take more money (another \$300 million) before things are settled later this year.

A second reform that must be fully implemented is the establishment of Equitas, a reinsurance company which is intended to take responsibility for the so-called "long tail": the billions of dollars of unresolved asbestos and pollution claims in the United States. And sorting out Equitas has also not proved easy.

The person hired to do that job, Heidi Hutter, has indicated she will leave soon. It was Hutter who was responsible for untangling the mess left behind by the old Lloyd's, a mess that includes the outcomes of "Superfund" environmental clean-up rulings in the US and the unseamless of some 100,000 reinsurance contracts taken out by Lloyd's underwriters to protect themselves.

With a settlement between the Names and the market in place, and the destabilizing environmental and reinsurance contracts ring-fenced within the Equitas fund, Sandler and the Lloyd's Council will be able to create the new Lloyd's. This new market will be largely funded by corporate capital and Names whose syndicates will be reorganized into corporate vehicles with limited liability. Members of this

new Lloyd's will help discharge the liabilities of the old Lloyd's, collected in Equitas, through such mechanisms as a surcharge on premiums.

On the financial front, the reconstruction of Lloyd's has been helped by the fact that the insurance cycle has moved in its favor since 1992. How favorable is still unclear because of the three-year lag created by Lloyd's antiquated accounting system. This will be replaced by a more transparent one-year system in the new Lloyd's.

The outlines of a newly financed and better regulated market can be seen in the future Lloyd's has plotted for itself. But with the loss of unlimited liability and the old, laissez faire style, there may also be some shrinkage of capacity and loss of competitive advantage. ☐

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Godzilla may have been replaced by typhoons as the stuff of nightmares for Japanese insurers

## Environmentalists gaining an unlikely ally

# A new force enters the climate fray

By Christopher Flavin

WHEN ENVIRONMENTAL leaders from more than 120 countries met in Berlin in March 1995 for the first Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change, they were greeted by an April snowstorm. The inauspicious spring blizzard seemed a fitting backdrop to a chilly and contentious session, pitting rich nations against poor ones, heavy carbon emitters against less carbon-intensive nations, and small island states against countries that feel less vulnerable.

Yet even as negotiators labored over mind-numbing issues such as "adequacy of commitments" and "joint implementation," the urgency of the climate threat was being heightened by new scientific studies. As with many threats, this one prompted a new confluence of political forces, including a potent newcomer: the insurance industry.

In Berlin, this force began to assert itself. A seminar on the insurance implications of climate change preceded the official conference, and executives from leading European insurers such as Munich Re and Lloyd's of London stayed on to observe the proceedings. Their participation reflects the fact that as disaster claims mounted in the early 1990s, insurance executives began to consider their vulnerability to global warming.

The entry of the insurance industry into the debate on climate change is a potential watershed. As a business on the front lines of society's most risky activities, the insurance industry has a century-long tradition of spurring important social policy changes to help reduce those risks. In the United States, for example, the industry's experience with fire-related claims led it to point out that stricter building codes could reduce the frequency of fires. Insurers then played a leading role in lobbying governments to adopt such codes.

Similarly, they have fought since the early seventies for tougher safety standards for automobiles—often battling directly with auto industry lobbyists. The resulting regulations on crash-resistant bumpers, seatbelts, and airbags

have saved tens of thousands of lives, and avoided billions of dollars in insurance losses.

Some critics say that insurance is only a concern of the developed world, noting that Europe, Japan and the US are home to most of the major insurance markets. But these countries are also the major producers of greenhouse gases. The US produced 1.3 billion tons of carbon emissions in 1994, the most in the world. Japan ranked fourth, Germany fifth, and the UK seventh. So changing things in these countries will have a major impact worldwide.

After the Berlin conference, several companies have prepared internal reports on the issue and scientists have been consulted. H.R. Kaufman, the General Manager of Swiss Re, one of Europe's largest insurance companies, says, "There is a significant body of scientific evidence indicating that last year's record insured loss from natural catastrophes was not a random occurrence. Failure to act would leave the [insurance] industry and its policy-

holders is that their rates and coverage policies have always been based on the law of averages. In the case of weather-related coverage, they look to past climate trends and assume that over time, the frequency of catastrophes will stay the same. But in a world of rapidly changing and highly unpredictable weather trends, such calculations have to be thrown overboard.

Some industry experts believe that another "bad year" or two, or even a single catastrophic storm, could force major companies into bankruptcy. As a first step, many companies are reducing their exposure in coastal real estate (known as "shore-lining"), wildfire-prone regions, and valleys where floods are possible.

The trend is particularly clear in areas such as the Caribbean. In the past, insurance has served as a buffer against extreme events, a buffer that would be even more important in a world of more frequent natural disasters. If the insurance industry solves its vulnerability problem by abandoning certain forms of protection, then either governments will have to step in as the insurer of last resort, or individual citizens will be forced to pay the price.

With this in mind, industry leaders such as Frank Nutter, President of the Reinsurance Association of America, have begun to argue that their industry should take a more direct role in the issue of global climate change. For example, Munich Re said in a 1995 report: "The imminent change in our climate makes speedy, radical countermeasures unavoidable."

Of course, talking about action and venturing into the unfamiliar arena of greenhouse policies are two different things. The insurance industry faces a formidable opponent in the fossil fuel lobby, and the struggle will be based on data, theories and observations that are often disputed. But if the insurance industry does not build on the momentum of Berlin, its future is likely to be stormy indeed. ☐

CHRISTOPHER FLAVIN IS A SENIOR RESEARCHER FOR THE US-BASED WORLDWATCH INSTITUTE AND CO-AUTHOR OF *Power Surge: Guide to the Coming Energy Revolution*.



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Latin culture is invading the consciousness of people far removed from Spain and South America



Finding their way onto the heads of US presidents

## Mobsters, presidents and ministers find use for Ecuador's Panama hat

By Arturo and Maureen Brigid González

WHEN A STRING OF JAUNTY male models strutted down the runways of the Paris fashion shows last summer, many wore on their heads the ultimate symbol of cool refinement: elegantly banded, finely woven Panama hats. Both Balmain and Kenzo selected traditional Panamas to emphasize the ease and elegance of their summer collections.

As the world approaches the 21st century, this venerable straw hat, dating back to the Spanish conquistadors, continues to dominate the world's bot-weather headgear. Straw for the hat—which despite its name actually comes from Ecuador—is grown, woven and crafted along the twisting Boulevard of the Volcanoes in the Andean highlands around the colonial city of Cuenca.

When Pizarro's armored conquerors first trooped into the Andes, they found the native Incas wearing straw tequilas and quickly realized there might be a market in Europe for this lightweight, hot-weather headgear. An early designer of the Panama hat was Francisco Delgado who, in the 1500s, took a group of local weavers to Ecuador's port city of Guayaquil and then to Peru in an effort to train more of the indigenous people to weave hats and build the new colony's export trade.

Eventually, the Ecuadorian hat trade coalesced around Cuenca, an isolated town in the Pucarámba valley high in the Andes. Villagers in the valleys around the city weave the straw during the week, then take their piles of work into town by truck and wait for it to be graded by Cuenca's demanding hatmakers. When they are paid, they head back into the hills to weave some more.

In Cuenca, the straws are trimmed, bleached in sodium sulfate and perox-

ide baths, some of them dyed, then hems pounded to soften them, then steamed into a variety of popular shapes. Their route to market is how they got to be known as Panamas.

Americans first encountered these distinctive sombreros de paja toquilla during the California Gold Rush. Many forty-niners traveled to California by sailing down to the east coast of Panama, crossing the narrow isthmus, then sailing up the Pacific coast to the gold fields. To ward off the tropical sun in Panama, many bought the local sun hat, which had migrated up from Ecuador. Thus the "Panama" hat.

It was in 1855 at the Paris World Exposition that the Panama made the leap from being just practical protection against the tropical sun to becoming a chic European fashion statement. King Napoleon III decided that he fancied the most expensive Panama on display, and once he started wearing it, *le tout monde* joined in. Many of Renoir's warm paintings of Parisians at picnics along the banks of the Seine show *les gentils hommes* wearing the very latest Ecuadorian straws.

The United States' flirtation with empire further extended the fame of the Panama. In 1898, the US went to war with Spain over the alleged Span-

ish destruction of the USS Maine in Havana harbor. US troops for the first time were going to war in the tropics, not only in Cuba but in Spain's other major overseas colony, the Philippines. Tropical uniforms had to be issued, and 50,000 Panama hats were ordered.

America's next great tropical adventure was the building of the Panama Canal. Construction crews found the Panama hat the perfect headgear for warding off sunstroke, and newsreel film and photographs of the men at work carried the image of the hat into homes and nickelodeons all across the United States.

When President Teddy Roosevelt went south to inspect the canal in 1906 wearing a curly-brimmed Panama, it was a sign that in terms of high fashion this hat was definitely in the ring. Each US President since Grover Cleveland has been ceremonially presented with a fine Panama by the Ecuadorian government.

The Panama hat even had a period as the official headgear of the Moh. Al Capone went into Alcatraz Prison wearing a fashionable Panama, and many of the boozers who emulated Big Al wore the same style. Ecuador's hat-makers still turn out a broad, suabrimmed model called El Capone.

Many film heroes—Humphrey Bogart and Gary Cooper to name two—have played classic roles speaking their lines out from under the brim of a Panama hat. Winston Churchill, photographed painting a seascape in Cap Ferrat after World War II, has a Panama on his head. When Nikita Khrushchev arrived in Washington for a summit in 1964, his ill-fitting communist suit was topped off with a stylish Panama. ☐

ARTURO AND MAUREEN BRIGID GONZÁLEZ ARE FREELANCE WRITERS BASED IN FLORIDA.

Latin culture begins to assert itself

## Something more than macho

As the financial press spent the 1970s and 1980s ridiculing Latin America's debt-ridden financial culture, its music, art, literature, language, clothing and food were staking a growing claim to the world's attention. Today, Latin American culture may be the region's most important export

By Daniel Samper

THE NUMBER of Spanish words that have been incorporated into English and other languages gives an indication of the presence of the Hispanic culture on the international scene. Many of the words refer to subversive activities (guerrilla, junta, handolier), or to the world of dubious ethics (picareque, Don Juan, peccadillo, desperado), or to exotic things (parakeet, maraca, papaya, torador, picador).

The best known words that have jumped to other languages are two pejorative terms: macho and machismo. Practically no artistic, philosophic or scientific terms come to mind.

Nevertheless, in the past few years we have seen different Spanish terms trickling into the world. Rather than referring to war or low life, they are expressions about music (salsa, merengue), food (tapas, tortilla) and literature (Macondo, Borgian). They reflect a community that has little to offer to the scientific vocabulary, but whose presence in popular culture can be perceived with increasing strength.

There are lots of examples:

► In Japan there is a band that sings and plays the joyful Caribbean salsa, even though the musicians don't speak Spanish and hence don't understand the lyrics they are singing. The first bullfighter has also surfaced.

► Many South Korean universities have tunas, groups of singing students that are traditional in Spanish colleges.

► One of the most successful singers in the United States is Gloria Estefan, of Cuban origin, who has popularized Latin American rhythms.

► In Russia, Turkey, Taiwan and other European and Asian countries, housewives are crazy about Latin American soap operas, which they see on local TV dubbed into their own language.

► Hollywood is producing many films

(like "Carlito's Way" and "Desperado") about Latin culture. A hero of this movement is the Spanish actor Antonio Banderas, whose looks have been imitated by many youngsters since at the Academy Awards ceremony he was declared the best looking man in the world.

► Two of the most famous tenors in the world—Plácido Domingo and José Carreras—are Spanish. But some people say that the best of the lot is Alfredo Kraus... also Spanish.

► Latin American writers have become prominent in the US market, to the point that Oscar Hijuelos, a New York Cuban, won the Pulitzer Prize with his novel, "The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love," later translated into half a dozen languages.

The advance of Latin culture is also reflected by the spread of the Spanish language. It is estimated that more than

people who want to learn it as a second or third language. "In the 1980s there were about 21,000 Spanish teachers in the United States, but now that figure has almost doubled," says Juan R. Lloreda, a philology professor at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid.

The same phenomenon can be observed in other countries. In Japan, Spanish is taught in 110 universities, and in Sweden it is the most popular language after English. "If Spanish doesn't have as many students as English in the next few years, it will be due only to a shortage of teachers," says a professor at the University of Upsala.

The Spanish language brings with it a culture whose personality derives from a mixture of races and customs from four continents: Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas. This mixture explains, for example, the attraction of salsa, a music born in the Caribbean

but raised and nurtured in New York. The complicated harmonies of salsa have quietly penetrated jazz and even the traditional gypsy rumba.

Latin culture is very imaginative when it comes to telling stories, as shown by the work of Gabriel García Márquez and Carlos Fuentes, among others. The "magic realism" of García Márquez has extended its influence all

the way to India: Salman Rushdie says that García Márquez is his best teacher.

Popular culture, a vital force that is not well documented in history books, obviously recognizes the Hispanic influence. To find out how much of this influence will remain incorporated into the international social current, we may have to wait and consult the dictionaries of the future. ☐

DANIEL SAMPER, A COLOMBIAN WHO LIVES IN MADRID, IS AN ASSOCIATE EDITOR OF *The World Paper*.

Yankee invasion welcomed with open arms

## Hispanic culture produced in US conquers Latin American audiences

By Carlos Castillo

IN THE GOOD old times, Latin American elites admired Elizabeth Taylor and Frank Sinatra as icons of American culture. Today, mass audiences in Mexico, Venezuela, the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua celebrate Conchita Morales, Don Francisco and John Secada—stars of the new US Latin culture.

Ratings and profits are soaring as actors, singers and TV personalities of Spanish origin have become prime-time stars in the growing network of US Hispanic channels watched in Central and South America—all to the chagrin of the Latin American elite.

"The American culture is now being exported in Spanish with Chicanos, Cuban or Dominican accents to Latin audiences," laments Costa Rican writer Fabian Dohles. His Mexican colleague, Carlos Monsivais, agrees: "To get visibility and public recognition in our native countries, we must now appear on the 'Cristina' show on Univision (in the United States), because more than any other time, Latin intellectuals need a seal of approval from US television."

Dohles and Monsivais express the mood among traditional intellectuals and self-proclaimed "culture fighters" in Latin America, who see the spread of US Hispanic cable channels as the



Singing a mixture of traditional Mexican music and American pop, Selena's popularity spanned both sides of the US/Mexico border. She was shot in 1995

biggest threat so far to the region's identity and diversity.

To many, television is the key concern, mainly because shows made in the United States inevitably reflect the US public agenda. Media experts such as Muniz Sodre of Brazil say that shows like "Cristina," "Sábado Gigante" or

"Ocurrió Así" (all in Spanish but produced in the United States, some of them with Hispanic live audiences) cannot erase the cultural heritage of Latin America itself. "But these shows tend to fill the agenda of issues offered to public debate, so that local problems

► CONQUERS NEXT PAGE







## Business scene

■ The Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) and the French Schneider Electric Co. signed a \$15 million agreement to build an electricity generating station south of Amman. The project is financed by a loan from the Islamic Development Bank and the JEA. It is expected to be completed in the summer of 1997.

■ The Rural and Urban Development Bank granted a JD 5 million loan to finance 113 projects in 40 municipalities and village councils around the Kingdom in 1995. The projects were of an infrastructural nature.

■ The Arab International Hotels Co. (AIH) agreed to increase its paid capital by JD 1.3 million, thus making it JD nine million. Its new tourism projects are estimated at JD 12 million. During the first six months of 1995, the company realized JD 1.6 million in profits.

■ A feasibility study conducted by an Austrian cooperation has recommended the building of railway lines between Amman-Zarqa and Zarqa-Sweileh. The project will cost JD 51 million. On the other hand, a Holland consulting company will start preparing studies on the rehabilitation of the railway between Amman-Aqaba in two weeks. Holland will fund these studies.

■ Jerash received 282,599 tourists during 1995. The Records of the Antiquities Bureau show that among this total number were 81,400 Jordanians, 197,050 Arab and foreign tourists and 5,149 children. The revenues collected were JD 414,964.

■ Waste water treatment projects in Amman Governorate cost JD 35 million. Some of them have been connected to the city's sewerage system. The city is waiting for the results of invited tenders for a cost JD 13,351,000, while others are being implemented at a cost of JD 12,923,000.

■ In 1995, the Department of Public Works in the Tafleeh Governorate started road pavement projects and established rural roads at a cost of JD 1,914,951. Not only had these roads facilitated the connection of Tafleeh with the other cities of the country, but also helped farmers to market their products more effectively.

## Fostering reforms increases investment and reduces unemployment, Fanek

AMMAN (Star)—Jordan's new economic directions and prospects were the theme of Dr Fahed Fanek's lecture at the Shoman Foundations earlier this week.

In a comparative-analytical approach, Fanek outlined the major trends of Jordan's economic management, before and after the reform program imposed by the IMF. He said that today Jordan's economy is faced by two problems: unemployment and lack of foreign currency.

Dr Fanek said that in the past, Jordan's economy was dependent on the public sector, foreign aid, and direct Government intervention. As a result, the people indulged in higher living standards than the country's resources allowed. This gap, however, was filled by aid from Gulf states and borrowing from the West which led to rising debts.

Dr Fanek maintained that the new economic reform programs ensure coordination

among the different sectors. This means reducing consumption levels to suit the country's resources, and adapting to a more open economy towards the world market.

Dr Fanek said that despite what people may think, economic statistics show that there is no recession in the country. He added that people make comparisons between their situation and their expectations, rather than basing their judgments on the realities of this year as compared to last year, or on comparison with the situation in other societies.

Dr Fanek emphasized that the increase in the reserves of the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ), and encountering financial pressures through raising interest rates are the most significant features of the 1995 government-adopted reforms.

He added that the peace process has brought about positive results, especially since people have begun to feel more secure under the mutual recognition of borders between Israel and

Jordan. The offers of external aid, and the writing off of foreign debts add to this security.

He pointed to those factors which would affect future economic trends in Jordan. Among these is Jordan's openness to other economies and its affiliation to the GATT by the end of this year.

Dr Fanek stressed that the economy's adaptation to the new situation in the region is another important factor. He said that Palestinian markets are of crucial importance to Jordan's economy, especially as Palestinian consumer goods are almost identical to those of this country.

However, he said that this is not the case with the Israeli market, to whose different requirements, Jordan has to adapt. He explained that Jordan's economy is characterized by its agricultural and light industrial production, while the Israeli economy is highly technologically developed.

Fanek also emphasized that Iraq is the most important trading partner of Jordan. It is the number one country in export-import terms, and it is in Jordan's interest to maintain good, strong, and natural economic relations with it.

Dr Fanek further noted that in the absence of an all-Arab integration, Jordan has to opt for one or two possibilities: an Israeli-dominated Middle East market, or entering into a European partnership. He believes that the latter option is preferable.

Dr Fanek expects Jordan's economic independence from debt and aid to materialize in 1998. By then, Jordan will be

rid of its debts, and no new programs will be needed. He added, however, that if reforms continue with such vigour, investment will increase and unemployment fall. ■



## Ministerial conference opts for aid to Palestinian people

FOLLOWING THE Interim Agreement on 28 September, 1995, representatives of the donor community, Israel and the Palestinian National Authority met in Paris on 9 January. They endeavoured to re-energize assistance to the Palestinian people and provide additional support to the peace process.

The Ministerial Conference on Economic Assistance to the Palestinian People was hosted and chaired by France and substantial preparation was undertaken by the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee under the chairmanship of Norway. The committee includes the European Union, the United States, the Russian Federation, Japan, Israel, the Palestinian National Authority, Canada, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia, the World Bank and the United Nations. Special Co-ordinators in the Occupied Territories, Representatives of regional and extra-regional parties as well as international organizations attended.

The participants expressed their desire to contribute to the success of the peace process. They resolved to send an unequivocal signal to Palestinians, Middle Eastern nations and the international community to stand by the Palestinian people as they take risks for peace and begin to play a larger role in shaping their destiny.

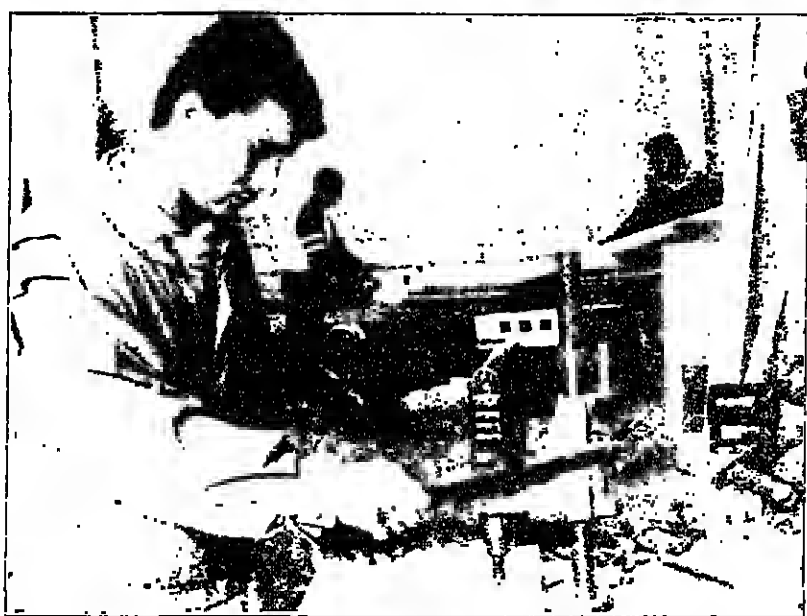
Donors underlined the

importance they attach to the elections due to take place in the West Bank and Gaza Strip on 20 January.

They reaffirmed their support for Palestinian self-government authority in line with the Interim Agreement of a comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

■ Conference participants emphasized the importance of improving the economic and social conditions of the Palestinians through a comprehensive effort to create jobs, improve physical and social infrastructure, and establish the basis for sustainable economic development.

■ In April 1995, the Palestinian National Authority, Israel, and the international community adopted a Tripartite Action Plan aimed at reducing the Palestinian budget deficit and at stimulating economic development. The participants praised the signature of a revised version of this accord which takes into account the most recent economic and



political developments. Israel will assist and facilitate Palestinian economic development. The international community is committed to support and contribute to the economic development in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

■ The Palestinian National Authority also underscored the importance of the Core Investment Program, which was unanimously adopted by PNA and presented by the authority during the meeting of the Consultative Group of the World Bank last October.

This Program, with its focus on economic development and employment creation, contains investments totalling \$550 million. The investment projects include, inter alia, roads, wells, schools and hospitals as well as water and other infrastructure projects.

■ Donors demonstrated their support for the \$550 million Core Investment Program and other priority projects presented by the PNA, including the establishment of industrial zones, the ongoing assistance program as well as financing

the recurrent cost deficit of \$75 million, by mobilizing the following resources:

■ Undisbursed commitments amounting to US \$ 500 million, commitments in 1996 to the Core Investment Program, other priority projects, recurrent cost deficit and other forms of assistance, amounting to \$ 865 million.

This amounts to more than \$13 billion, which will be mobilized by the donor community in 1996. In addition, a number of donor countries would continue to provide substantial levels of in-kind assistance.

■ The Conference requested that the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee follow-up on all issues raised during this Conference and additional project proposals put forward by the Palestinian Authority. The AHLC would undertake to hold no informal meeting in April.

■ The PNA committed itself to a medium term economic strategy focused on private investment as the engine of growth. The plan aims to help the Palestinian economy to take its place in a regional and global environment of trade and investment.

■ The United States and the European Union announced their intention to improve ways of promoting Palestinian exports through the granting of duty-free status and other trade privileges. ■

## Business Chronicle

## Remarks on the 1996 budget

THE ANNUAL budget, which has just been passed by Parliament, reflects the major directions of the present economic and social policies, said Dr Munir Hamameh. The budget is not an account of revenues and appropriations, but has repercussions on economic activity and social concerns. Hence, equilibrium and imbalance in a state's budget should not and could not be viewed in isolation from society. Writing in *Ad Dunour* he said combined with socio-economic policies, the budget must serve society and realize its stability and progress, not vice versa.

Dr Hamameh dwells on issues which inspire equilibrium, but also trigger or deepen the imbalance in society.

The first concern is domestic revenues, he said. The 1996 budget estimates amounts of JD 1552 million. This is a 5.6 percent increase over the 1995 revenues, but there is an important difference. In the previous years, including 1995, revenues included the post, phone, and cable services which amounted to JD 170 million. The earnings from these are excluded from the 1996 budget, though they continue to be paid by people. However, there is no reason to drop these from the budget at a stroke and without explanation, Dr Hamameh maintains. But, since citizens continue to bear the financial burden of these services, then the earnings accrued have to be part of the overall revenues which would naturally increase to JD 1690 million (17 percent over 1995).

The second concern deals with income tax. It amounts to JD 865 million (57 percent of total earnings). It has increased tremendously over the previous years and its largest proportion comes from the sales tax. Revenues from customs duties are estimated at JD 560 million compared with JD 499 million in 1995 (an 11.22 percent increase). However, it is quite noticeable that while customs duties were decreasing throughout the past few years, the sales tax tended to go upwards, he said.

Custom duties were JD 230 million in 1993; JD 217 million in 1994; JD 212 million in 1995; and are estimated at JD 205 million in 1996. Since its institution in 1993, the sales tax increased from JD 174 million, to JD 223 million in 1994, JD 280 million in 1995, and is now estimated at JD 374 million for 1996 (a 33.5 percent increase over 1995). As is known, this is an indirect tax, but it affects prices and national production costs.

The third concern is the impact of the reduction in custom duties. This leads to an increase in imports, and logically increases the pressure on the balance of payment. Despite the fact that state policies in general encourage export, it is not seen—under the circumstances—that any increases can be sufficient enough to reduce the foreign trade deficit. As a result, the tendency towards foreign borrowing will strengthen, and foreign debts will increase to treat the occurring imbalance in the balance of payment, which is contradictory to the economic reform and correction policies of this country, Dr Hamameh concluded. ■

## Israel looks to the Far East

AS A result of the peace process, Israel wants to establish business in Asia and is looking to places such as India, China, Vietnam, Pakistan and Indonesia. According to the Chairman of the Israel Corporation Ltd, the message is clear. "They want us, they need us, they like us." The real peace dividend for Israel is that the barriers are now down in the fastest-growing markets in the world, which are in Asia, not the Middle East.

Potential trade between Israel and Arab countries remains limited despite all the optimism and talk of a new Middle East. Israeli trade with Egypt, with which Israel has been at peace with for 16 years, was \$44 million in 1994. That figure was double that of 1993, but Israeli officials don't expect Egyptian-Israeli trade to go much beyond \$100 million in the coming years. Israel has set a strategy to target Asian countries which are eager for business. Their markets offer a better fit for Israeli high-technology, agricultural and consumer products.

Israel is aggressively courting counterparts from Indonesia, China, Japan and South Korea, both at international meetings and on personal visits. Business delegations flow to Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and other former Soviet Republics.

Unlike trade with her Arab neighbors, Israel's business with Asia is booming. Overall trade has grown 85% in the past four years, from under \$3 billion in 1990 to \$5.5 billion in 1994.

Some Israeli companies, specially the high-tech ones, consider the Asia-Pacific region as the most dynamic market. For the Israeli Rada Data Communications, China is now the second largest market, after the US.

The Asian arena offers not just lucrative markets, but the kind of acceptance Israel has carved in the Middle East. In Jordan, a businessman who has signed an agreement to import products from Israeli companies, said that he is labelling them all "Made in the USA" for fear of being boycotted. In Azerbaijan, on the other hand, Strauss Ice cream, Maccabee beer and other Israeli brand names are flown in weekly from Tel Aviv and sold on the streets of the former Soviet Republic.

The major Israeli exports to Asia consist of precious stones, and metals (54%), machinery and electrical equipments (22%), Chemical products (15%), and 9% others. ■

## Foreign Exchange

Wednesday, 17 JANUARY 1996

	Buy JD	Sell JD
0.7080	0.7100	
1.0934	1.0989	
0.4895	0.4919	
0.6076	0.6106	
0.1429	0.1436	
0.6709	0.6743	
0.4369	0.4391	
0.0450	0.0452	

## IDP at forefront of industrial development

AMMAN (Star)—The Industrial Development Bank (IDB) realized a net profit of JD 4.8 million in 1995 compared to only JD 2.8 million in 1994 (a 71% increase). Mr Rajab Al-Sa'd, the IDB's general manager, said this increase is the direct result of the efforts of the management that are aimed at promoting the bank and rationalizing its expenses. He added that the IDB continued to offer loans to industry at an "unprecedented level that was compatible to the economic growth taking place in Jordan."

Mr Al-Sa'd said the bank earned in 1995 a total of JD 7.3 million compared to JD 4.7 million in the year before. He said the IDB's management and general expenses de-

creased from JD 2.2 million in 1994 to JD 1.9 million in 1995. As for the IDB's assets, Mr Al-Sa'd said they increased from JD 124 million in 1994 to JD 135 million last year. He explained that this increase in the bank's assets was mainly to the credits it offered to the industrial and tourism sectors. In real terms, they increased from JD 91 million in 1994 to JD 101 million in 1995.

Mr Al-Sa'd pointed out that the net deposits of the shareholders' equity amounted to JD 28 million in 1995 compared with nearly JD 16 million in 1994 (an increase of almost 75%). This increase accrued from two main factors: the rise in the bank's paid capital, and the increase in the bank's various re-

serves. Mr Al-Sa'd said that in 1995 the IDB granted 137 loans at JD 21 million. These included 97 industrial loan projects at JD 15 million; 22 tourist projects loans at JD 5 million; and another 18 loans at JD 1 million.

He noted that the costs of these projects are estimated at JD 6 million. He added that they are expected to accrue a JD 25 million in value added terms to the GNP, and create about 1,259 new jobs.

The IDB also granted in 53 loans in 1995 at JD 400,000 to minor professions and handicrafts around the Kingdom.

In the field of training, Al-Sa'd said that the IDB's Jordan's Institute of Management organized 124

training programs in 1995, from which 1,385 Jordanian and Arab participants benefited.

On the IDB's role and its preservation of the environment, Mr Al-Sa'd said that in accordance with the Jordanian-German agreement, the IDB has access to DEM 5 million to fund efforts at reducing pollution and environmental dangers. He added that the IDB uses these funds to grant soft loans to existing industrial enterprises to assist them abide by safety standards and preservation of the environment.

As for future plans, Mr Al-Sa'd said that the IDB has adopted a package of new investment policies, comprehensive banking services, and diversified resources. ■

## MARKET WATCH

13-16 January

Highest and lowest performing stocks in the Amman Financial Market

SATURDAY	%	SUNDAY	%	MONDAY	%	TUESDAY	%
Arab Bank	1.65	Arab Medical Supplies	1.30	Arab Pharm. Industry	3.65	National Chlorine Manuf.	1.81
Arab Industrial Bank	1.41			Razay Pharm. Industry	2.67	Philadelphia Bank	1.50
Arab Dairies & Moulds	1.33			JIMCO	2.21	Amman Cairo Bank	1.12
Arab East Complex	5.17	Middle East Bank	5.45	Int'l Textile Manufacture	5.66	Middle East Complex	4.81
Arab East & Poultry	3.39	Arab Banking Corporation	5.04	Arab Trade & Investment	4.62	Intermediate Petro-Chemical	4.46
Arab Plastic Industry	2.27	Jordan Industry Supplies	4.12	Nayzak Dies & Moulds	4.88	Nayzak Dies & Moulds	3.95

General Price Pointer	153,850	152,430	152,530	152,530			
Trade Volume	673083	806622	736749	736749			
Stock Volume	404843	413665	328052	328052			
Highest Traded Stocks							
General Factories	108,545	+ Jordan Electric	98,154	+ Arab Bank	184,750	+ Arab Bank	184,750

All data provided by ACCESS Tel: 646868 Fax: 646949

## LURIE'S WORLD



"I caught it! I caught it!"



# AROUND TOWN



## Mabrouk

● Samer al Qaderi and his bride Niveen Saadeh celebrated their engagement recently among the circle of their friends and relatives. We wish them a happy and prosperous life together.



## Ghazi Al Thibah:

# A poetic celebration of daily life

By Munther Hamdan  
Special to The Star

GAZI AL THIBAH is a Jordanian poet with a distinguished style of writing and a language that reflects everyday life. He believes poets should create in people a sensitivity towards the beauties of life. Poetry can play a significant role in people's life provided it is related to their everyday reality.

Al Thibah lately published his first collection of poetry entitled "Forgotten Statements". The book, which was issued by the Arab Writers Union in Damascus, consists of poems celebrating statements and ways of life that are no longer in the memory of people. These aspects do not appear in Al Thibah's poem as they are in actuality but as they are perceived by the artist whose imagination introduces them artistically.

Al Thibah told The Star that his book is a collection of rhymed and unrhymed poetry written up to 1993. He added that presenting daily life in poetry using simple language, usually prose, must pay close attention to the importance of the structure. "Poets should have their own techniques since poetry is not only spontaneous writing," Al Thibah said. "Forgotten statements" converts prose into poetry. Al Thibah

thinks that life is a variation of rhythms that poets can turn into poetic structures. People's speeches, jokes, differences and emotions are all present in the book. It is as if the poet draws our attention to details we forgot or we have never noticed before. He said in one of his poems "A Clock on the wall/ A clock in front of me counting air in the room". A poet lives in a different time-frame from everyone else.

The difference between poets, if judged by their works and not their autobiographies, lies in the style they adopt when picturing reality. Some problematize reality, thus creating a philosophical poem, while others introduce it in a superficial manner. Al Thibah chose a place in between. His creativity is due to his innovative choice of details he includes in his poem. "Depicting reality is a form of hunting, thus one should be precise" Al Thibah told The Star.

The reader is part of the creative process. Poetry can live only through the interaction between the writer and the reader. The whole process is an exploration of a mutual mentality. Al Thibah believes poetry must aspire to reach all people regardless of their educational levels. "A poet is not forced to choose only what he thinks the reader is likely to



understand or absorb" he added. The relation between the reader and the writer can be strengthened if poets write in a style that everyone can understand without affecting the sophistication of the text. Poets like Al Thibah should be supported. Creative people who are always questioning reality to produce such poetry should be taken care of. Intellectuals should work together to create a ground for a collective consciousness and a unified perspective of knowledge and culture. In this respect, it is painful to find that Al Thibah's book is issued in another country. In order not to lose our intellectuals we have to provide them with equal opportunities because in the end "the best lives on". ■



## Concert conducted by Charles Ansbacher

# A brilliant start of the season

By Eyad Amari  
Special to The Star

UNDER THE Patronage of HM Queen Noor Al Hussein The National Music Conservatory and the American Center hosted visiting conductor Dr Charles Ansbacher, featuring the Orchestra of the National Music Conservatory and the Orchestra of the Jordanian Armed Forces on Sunday, 14 January.

With an impressive program, the National Music Conservatory Orchestra's sixty-four members started the concert with Johann Strauss' *Die Fledermaus* overture. An opera in three acts produced in 1874, libretto by Carl Haflner and Richard Genée after the French farce *Le Réveillon*, the overture is always pleasant and contains much of the richness and liveliness of the Viennese music of that era. Savitana Farouqi was the piano soloist of Mozart's *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra* no. 24 in C minor, KV 491. The arrangement was brilliant and acoustics of the Royal Hall at the Philadelphia Hotel were excellent. The trials that seemed to rise indefinitely were never lost among the orchestra; rather, Ansbacher expertly managed to give the proper introduction and accompaniment. An American taste of contemporary orchestra



music, and finely selected, was presented from Leonard Bernstein's *West Side Story*. After the intermission, the Jordanian Armed Forces Orchestra (fifty four members) took the orchestra seats and started with George Bizet's *L'Arlesienne*. Composed in 1872 for a play by Alphonse Daudet under the same name, Bizet later wrote an orchestral suite. In 1879, Ernest Guiraud wrote the second suite which Ansbacher chose to play Sunday night. Johannes Brahms Hungarian Dances numbers 5 and 6 followed in a very new arrangement. Originally part of 21 dances for piano four-hands composed in 1851-69 Brahms later wrote numbers one, three and ten for orchestra, and in 1873 wrote

numbers one to ten for piano solo. Under Ansbacher's conducting the pieces were performed orchestrally without piano, a relatively innovative approach, especially since they were originally written in the style of the so-called Gypsy music (a small group of instrumentalists) rather than drawing on Hungarian folk music.

The two orchestras then joined to play two marches, Johann Strauss' *Radetzky March* and John Philip Sousa's *The Stars and Stripes Forever* March. Halfway through the first March, Ansbacher turned towards the audience and started clapping and soon the spectators joined him. This brilliant move turned the atmosphere to that of a ball-

room dance to everyone's content. After the marches, Queen Noor and the audience refused to leave the room, continuing their applause and demanding more music, and finally Ansbacher returned and repeated *Radetzky March*.

An icon of Jordan's cultural achievement, the conservatory's orchestra also offers group practice opportunities to the conservatory's students and teachers. The orchestra holds several concerts annually directed by Mohammad Othman Stig. Founded in 1979, the Armed Forces Orchestra gave many concerts in Jordan and abroad. The two orchestras glowed under Ansbacher's conducting, although he had little time to practice the pieces with them. Ansbacher's excitement and zeal for the event were beyond description, expressed by a small speech after the intermission and the way he repeatedly brought the musicians up to the platform to receive their share of homage.

The concert comes to prove, once again, the admirable level of the conservatory's achievement and their excellence choice of music. By playing classical favourites, they have managed to create an audience with an interest in a branch of music that is relatively new to Jordan. The concert is the first event of the 1996 season at the conservatory, and they still have much in store for us. ■

## Varieties at Royal Cultural Center

AN EVENING of poetry, Spanish songs and Russian opera was held Sunday at the Royal Cultural Center. The big audience was treated to two different styles of singing. Popular Spanish songs were performed by Mary David and her group which allowed the audience to enjoy some well-known dancing tunes. On the other hand, opera songs were performed by singer Svetlana Kupavina and Marina Sarokina presenting a kind of art that is highly different from the other, requiring more concentration.

The concert began by a poetry recital by Samir Al Shomali. He recited two poems about Amman and Beirut. The two cities were depicted as places of beauty, peace and love.

Following that, Mary David (singer), Youssef Ibrahim (guitarist) and William Moushi (organist) performed some popular Spanish songs. They played the Spanish dancing melody "Porompompo". The name of the song itself suggests a highly rhythmic tune. They also played "Aguas de Agug" a piece written by the famous composer Sala Gullu Iglesias. Ibrahim and Moushi joined David to singing leading to an integrated performance.

With Svetlana as a pianist, David performed a French song entitled "L'Oiseau de L'enfer". This song won the 21st Euro-vision contest with its call for love and peace. Although the song was in French, the audience could feel the enchanting rhythms of a romantic piece directing people to peace and stability.

David is a teacher of Ballroom and Arabic dancing. She graduated from England and then took vocal courses under the supervision of Svetlana. As for Youssef Ibrahim, he has a B.A. in Spanish language from Baghdad. He has been playing guitar for 20 years before joining the Jordanian Academy for music. Moushi is an Iraqi artist who is specialized in European, Latin American and Arabic Music. He played with many Orchestras for 15 years.

The second part of the concert was Svetlana's unprecedented performance of Opera Arias. Among the most famous pieces she performed were Bellini's "Aria Norma of Opera Norma", Puccini's "Aria of Cio Cio San opera" and Rossini's "Aria of Rosina". Svetlana's voice carried with it that simplicity which is characteristic of Russian culture. Her facial reactions during the performance reflected her full absorption into the music. She presented to Jordanians this opera which combines all depths of life. ■ MH

## Orbit special show on New Year's eve

THE ARAB world's leading satellite, radio and terrestrial broadcasters all came together to celebrate New Year's Eve 1996 in Beirut.

The Orbit Satellite Television and Radio Network, Radio Monte Carlo Moyen Orient, and Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation International all joined forces in the Levant for an eight hour marathon programme bringing in the New Year.

The joint broadcast from Beirut featured Doris from Al Thania - the Orbit channel carrying the broadcast to satellite - who flew in to co-host the show with fellow presenters, including Gaby Lutfi from Radio Monte Carlo Moyen Orient. Between link-ups with Cairo and Dubai, the programme presented Beirut nightspots, joining the celebrations, while Orbit receives were given as prizes to lucky viewers, as were cars and airline tickets.

Speaking about the broadcast, Doris said: "It was wonderful to work with LBCI and Radio Monte Carlo Moyen Orient. We all came together and worked very well as a team."

Radio Monte Carlo Moyen Orient is the world's leading Arabic language radio channel, with 11 million listeners from Alexandria to Abu Dhabi. LBCI is one of Lebanon's foremost television channels, drawing a national audience for special broadcasts such as New Year's Eve. ■

## OVERHEARD AT TURINO

### TURINO - A PASSION FOR FUN

TURINO CLUB RESTAURANT is adding another Cheers outlet in a new setting. We heard that Turino is preparing a new style advertisement that goes as follows:-

Cheers at Turino II (code name)

\* What is it?

Is it a restaurant, a pub, a trattoria, an eatery, a water-hole, a rock cafe, a tea room, a pizzeria, a burger joint, an imperial setting, a wine diner or whatever?

\* For whom?

For you the local, the foreigner, the Arab, the American, the European, the Japanese, the Korean, the Australian, the African.

Or is it for you all?

\* Is it for the young?

Or is it a place where the young rub shoulders with the old?

NO ANSWER NO COMMITMENT;

EXCEPT ONE!

CHECK IT FOR YOURSELF

See you at Turino or Cheers at Turino II!

Telephone 816690



## Victor Bisharat 1918-1996

# Monuments speak of his creative genius

VICTOR ADEL HANNA Bisharat, a well-known Palestinian architect passed away on Monday, 8 January 1996 in his home in Sacramento, California, leaving behind many architectural monuments that bear witness to his genius.

Bisharat was born in Jerusalem and studied at Terra Sancta college. He completed his higher education at the school of architecture at the American University of Beirut. In 1943, he left Jerusalem to the United States to study architecture and philosophy, settling in the United States after completing his studies.

Bisharat specialized in urban design. He established a prominent architecture firm with offices in Connecticut and New York. His international work included the design of the Jordan Pavilion for the World Fair held

in New York in 1963. Its design expresses the authentic Arab style in its domes and stained glass panels.

The pavilion was the first official introduction of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan abroad. In Jordan, Bisharat designed the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Amman. Unfortunately there is no reference to him as the innovator and designer of this monument.

The simple design of this work expresses the grandeur of Bisharat's work. Stone cubes with a band of black stones, engraved with beautiful calligraphy in gold - a stairway, lead-



Tomb of the Unknown Soldier designed by Victor Bisharat

ing to the entrance of the monument.

Other outstanding projects speak of his brilliant achievements and the unmistakable marks he left in Jordan, Saudi Arabia and many other places in the Arab World. He came back to Jordan in 1973 to design Queen Alia Air-

port. He would have loved to offer Jordan such a project but it was never realized. Instead he returned to America to realize his project there. He is survived by his brothers Dr. Maurice Bisharat, and Dr. George Bisharat, Dr. Emile Bisharat and Architect Fred Bisharat, who is following in his footsteps. He is also survived by his wife Clarita, son Tobias and daughters Arian and Yasmine.

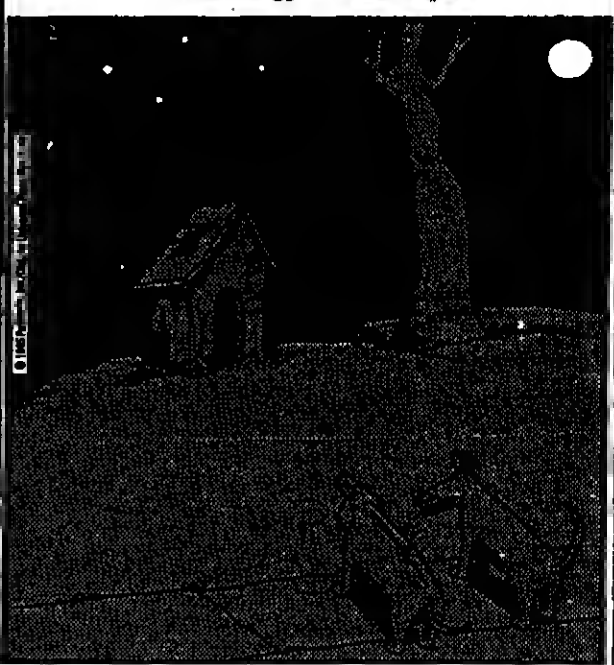
He will always be remembered by his work and the words he spoke at the dedication of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. "Excuse all what you see of body and soul; the secret of eternal life is in giving." ■

## THE FAR SIDE

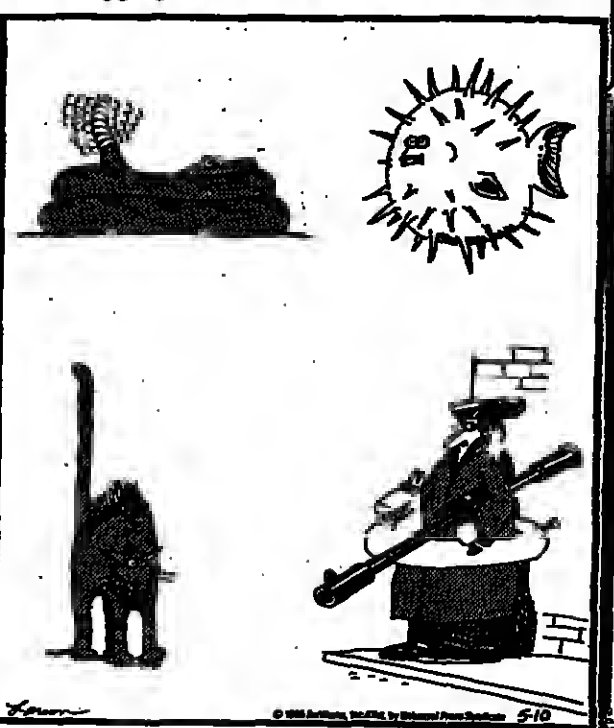
By GARY LARSON



Ornithology 101 field trips



"There it is—the old Muffy place. They say on some nights, when the moon is full, you can still hear him dragging his chain to the old oak and back."



How Nature says, "Do not touch."

## AGENDA

### Exhibitions

- A New Exhibition of Paintings and Sculpture by over 50 Contemporary Arab Artists, at Darat al Funun, today, Thursday, 18 January, 10 am to 8 pm.
- Print-making and Painting exhibition by Jordanian artist Yasser Dweik, at Darat al Funun, Opening today, Thursday, 18 January and continuing until 18 February.
- Water colour paintings and photographs by a German artist group at the Goethe Institut from Sunday 13 Jan until Sunday 21 Jan (except Friday) 9 am-6 pm.
- The Client at the American Center, today Thursday, 18 January at 5 pm.
- Der zerbrochene Krug by Heinrich von Kleist at the Goethe Institut on Monday, 22 January at 8 pm.
- Maria Stuart by Friedrich von Schiller at the Goethe Institut on Wednesday, 24 January at 8 pm.
- Le fils préfère at the French Cultural Center on Monday 22 January, at 8 pm.
- Lecture in Arabic by the artist Yasser Dweik about his exhibition at Darat al Funun, on Saturday, 20 Jan.

### Films



# The Star's TV GUIDE

Programs on JTV from 20-26 Jan.



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## Cinema

"DEAD TO RIGHTS" (Vidmark). Charles Bronson made a rare TV appearance, alongside "China Beach" alumna Dana Delany, in this mystery (originally shown on CBS as "Donato and Daughter"). They play estranged father-and-daughter police officers, whose personal troubles flare anew when they're teamed to find a serial killer who murdered two nuns; Bonnie Bartlett ("Sl. Elsewhere") also appears. \*\* (R: AS, P, V)

"ABOVE SUSPICION" (HBO). This drama's initial showing on HBO had sadly ironic timing, since it coincided with star Christopher Reeve's horse-riding accident. He plays a policeman shot in the line of duty and paralyzed. When his wife (Kim Cattrall) then cheats on him — with his own brother, no less — he devises a plan to eliminate them, believing no one would ever suspect him. \*\* (Not rated: AS, P, V)

"HELD OVER: 'MORTAL KOMBAT'" (New Line). The video game comes to life dizzily in this special-effects-crammed adventure, featuring Christopher Lambert as the mentor to three young heroes (Linden Ashby, Bridgette Wilson and Robin Shou) battling a sinister mastermind (Cary Hiroyuki Tagawa) who's out — naturally — to control the world. Talisa Soto ("Licence to Kill") also appears. \*\*\* (PG-13: P, V)

"AN AWFULLY BIG ADVENTURE" (New Line). Hugh Grant has a now-uncharacteristic role — as a fellow who's not quite as charming as the actor's "Four Weddings and a Funeral" alter ego — in this comedy from the same director, Mike Newell. It's about a young woman's (Georgina Cates) initiation into the theater world, which reveals some definite wars; Alan Rickman ("Die Hard") also stars. \*\*\* (R: AS, P)

"GUMBY: THE MOVIE" (Arrow/WarnerVision). Truly one of the most flexible stars — in the very literal sense — ever to star in his own movie, the popular, bendable figure and his horse pal Pokey get into new adventures in this feature-length tale. The plot also involves Gumb's new music group, The Clayboys (no, we're not kidding) ... and appropriately, each tape is packaged with a three-inch-high Gumb toy. \*\* (G)

COMING SOON: "THE INDIAN IN THE CUPBOARD" (Columbia/Tristar, Jan. 16): A youngster's toys come to life magically in the title cupboard in this fantasy-adventure. (PG)

"NINE MONTHS" (Fox, Jan. 16): Hugh Grant plays a child psychologist panicked by the prospect of having his own baby; Julianne Moore and Tom Arnold co-star. (PG-13)

"WATERWORLD" (MCA/Universal, Jan. 23): More celebrated for its cost than anything else last summer, the at-sea action epic stars Kevin Costner as its hero. (PG-13)

FAMILY-VIEWING GUIDE KEY: AS, adult situations; N, nudity; P, profanity; V, violence; GV, particularly graphic violence.

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### ENGLISH PROGRAM

#### SATURDAY

2:00—Moomins  
2:30—Wish Kid  
3:00—Harry And The Hendersons  
3:25—Blue Heelers  
4:00—Voyagers  
5:00—French Programs  
7:30—News Headlines  
7:35—Major Dad  
8:00—The Stamp of Greatness  
8:25—Hawaii Five-O  
9:10—The Glass Virgin  
10:00—News at Ten  
10:25—Feature Film: No Blade, starring: Helen Shaver & Steven Macht  
The moving story of a woman whose life turns into a tragedy as she learns about carrying the AIDS virus...  
11:50—Mancuso FBI

#### SUNDAY

2:00—The Flintstones  
2:30—Droopy Master Detective  
3:00—Family Playhouse  
3:10—Mac And Mutley  
3:30—Pugwall's Summer  
4:00—Voyagers  
5:00—French Programs  
7:30—News Headlines  
7:35—Are You Being Served  
8:00—Cinema, Cinema, Cinema  
8:25—Hawaii Five-O  
9:10—Women of the World  
9:35—Heart Beat  
10:00—News at Ten  
10:25—Counterstrike  
11:15—The American Chart Show  
12:00—Stay Lucky

#### MONDAY

2:00—Bonkers  
2:30—Rickey Rich  
3:00—Playabout  
3:15—Bustin Loose

### 3:40—Animals of the Mediterranean

4:00—Voyagers  
5:00—French Programs  
7:30—News Headlines  
7:35—McHale's Navy  
8:00—Inventions  
8:25—Hawaii Five-O  
9:10—Russia: The Missing Years  
10:00—News at Ten  
10:25—Perfect Scoundrels  
11:10—Taurus Rising  
12:00—Ellen

### TUESDAY

2:00—Captain Planet  
2:30—Jonny Quest  
2:50—Spirit of Adventure  
3:40—Scientific Eye  
4:30—Voyagers  
5:00—French Programs  
7:30—News Headlines  
7:35—You Bet Your Life  
8:00—Clive Anderson  
8:25—Hawaii Five-O  
9:10—99-1 (Police Drama)  
10:00—News at Ten  
10:25—I'll take Manhattan  
11:15—Feature Film: Bed and Breakfast, starring: Roger Moore & Talla Shire  
After a man is washed up on the beach in front of a house in Maine inhabited by a widow and her mother-in-law, the women's lives take some unexpected turns...

### WEDNESDAY

2:00—The Flintstones  
2:30—Speed Racer  
3:00—Bill Nye the Science Guy  
3:30—Amazing Stories  
4:00—Voyagers  
5:00—French Programs  
7:30—News Headlines  
7:35—Anything for a Laugh  
8:00—The Nature of Things  
8:25—Hawaii Five-O  
9:10—Horizon Poetical Attraction



99-1 (Police Drama), Tuesday at 9:10

10:00—News at Ten  
10:25—Prism  
10:45—Airwolf  
11:20—The Silk Road  
12:30—Second Thoughts

### THURSDAY

1:00—Fireman Sam  
1:15—The Legends Of Treasure Island  
1:45—My Secret Identity  
2:02—NBA  
3:05—The new leave it to Beaver  
3:30—Adventures Of The Old West  
4:30—Gillette World Sport  
5:00—French Programs  
7:30—News Headlines  
7:35—Carol And Company  
8:00—Magazine 01  
8:15—The Album Show  
9:10—Miami Vice  
10:00—News At Ten  
10:25—Feature Film: North

Beach And Raw Hide, starring: William Shatner & Tate Donovan  
When a young man and his brother are caught trying to steal a motorcycle, they are given one more chance...

### FRIDAY

1:00—The Little Mermaid  
1:30—Iris the happy professor  
1:40—Bush School  
2:00—See How They Grow  
2:15—Lift Off  
2:35—Super Carrier  
2:50—Goldrush in Alaska  
4:05—Wonder Why  
4:30—Give Us a Clue  
5:00—French Programs  
7:30—News Headlines  
7:35—Short Story Cinema  
8:05—Sea Quest  
8:15—America's Funniest

People  
9:10—Widows  
10:00—News at Ten  
10:25—Second Chances  
11:30—Feature Film: Pillow Talk, starring: Rock Hudson & Doris Day  
The ever-virginal Miss Day is keeping the wolves at bay. Tony Randall is excellent as the suitor who never wins the girl...

### PROGRAMMES EN FRANÇAIS

#### SAMEDI

5:00—Dessin animé  
Ordy  
5:15—Jeunesse  
Les Badabocks  
5:30—Série  
Fruits et légumes  
Le fiancé de Martine  
6:00—Série  
C'est mon histoire  
Rocket au lycée  
7:00—Le journal  
7:15—Faut pas rêver

#### DIMANCHE

5:00—Dessin animé  
Ordy  
5:15—Jeunesse  
Les Badabocks  
5:30—Série  
Fruits et légumes  
Déjeuner chez Amar  
5:50—Variétés  
Le concert de Jean-Michel Jarre à La Défense  
7:00—Le journal  
7:15—Sports et musique

#### LUNDI

5:00—Dessin animé  
Ordy  
5:15—Jeunesse  
Les Badabocks  
5:30—Série-Jeunesse

5:50—C'est pas sorcier  
L'aviation civile  
6:20—L'école des fans  
Les meilleurs moments  
7:00—Le journal  
7:15—Magazine  
Cinq sur cinq

#### MARDI

5:00—Dessin animé  
Ordy  
5:15—Jeunesse  
Les Badabocks  
5:30—Série-Jeunesse  
Les compagnons de l'aventure  
Les six compagnons dans la ville rose  
6:00—Magazine médical  
Savoir plus santé  
Les accidents de la route  
7:00—Le journal  
7:15—ushuaia

#### MERCREDI

5:00—Dessin animé  
Sophie et Virginie  
5:30—Série  
Des héros ordinaires  
Le frère traître  
7:00—Le journal  
7:15—Sports et musique

#### JEUDI

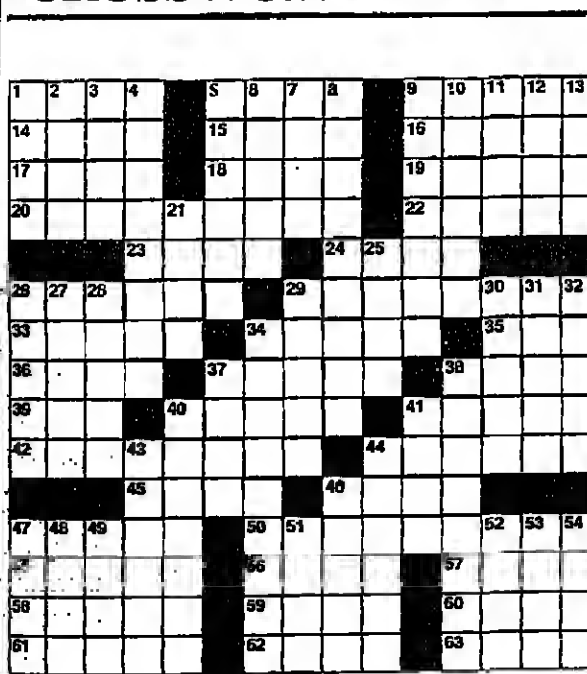
5:00—Dessin animé  
Sophie et Virginie  
5:30—Taratata  
avec Charles Aznavour  
7:00—Le journal  
7:15—Archimède

#### VENREDI

5:00—Dessin animé  
Sophie et Virginie  
5:30—Film  
7:00—Le journal  
7:15—Allo la Terre?

Programs are subject to change by JTV

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE



**ACROSS**  
1 Grandiose  
5 Cover  
9 Roman garment  
15 go bright  
16 small  
17 Plans, e.g.  
18 Lady's companion  
19 Overriding  
20 Happiness  
22 Easily annoyed  
23 avails  
24 Downpour  
26 Reproduced  
29 Plan  
33 Temper  
34 spirit  
35 Praire  
36 Much-used verb  
38 Seance sounds

**DOWN**  
1 Kelt  
2 Without sufficient funds  
3 Prince in opera  
4 Dieter's concern  
5 Estimation  
6 Butting  
7 Battery  
8 metal  
9 Claret  
10 Of a planet  
11 The East  
12 Chows and hushies  
13 Discharge  
14 Person of rank  
15 Celt  
16 Like a desert  
17 Feels  
18 concern  
19 Talk pompously  
20 Peter — picked...  
21 Delays  
22 Atelier item  
23 Grievance  
24 Guarded against danger  
25 The lost continent  
26 After peanut or shooting  
27 Gilt  
28 Pized  
29 Spicy stuff  
30 Stopping device  
31 Tie  
32 Alter-bath wear  
33 Eye  
34 A guttural  
35 Kind  
36 Gaele  
37 Small strongly

## —THIS WEEK'S— HOROSCOPE

By Linda Black

Weekly Tip: Find time for team sports even though there's a tough assignment looming.

**Aries (March 21-April 19).** A game may conflict with other responsibilities. With an extra surge of adrenalin, you can do it all. An attractive nuisance may just about drive you crazy.

**Taurus (April 20-May 20).** A friend could be particularly annoying. If the discussion's getting nowhere, go for a drive instead. You're luckier in love.

**Gemini (May 21-June 21).** Stay home and concentrate on getting all the little jobs done. If you do that, the rest of the month will be easier.

**Cancer (June 22-July 22).** You'll be tempted to buy the most expensive item. If you wait to do your shopping, you'll make a better deal.

**Leo (July 23-Aug. 22).** You should be in a good mood. That's lucky, because there's lots of work to be done!

**Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** You're under pressure. Don't argue, just do the job. Check your work even more carefully than usual.

**Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** Your friends can help solve a big problem. Comply with regulations. Pay the bills.

**Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** An arrogant authority figure could be hard to take, especially if you know the material from experience. A friend will come to your rescue.

**Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** Get out for a run or bike ride. You need the exercise, and a friend needs the company.

**Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** An attractive expert can help with finances. Do your field work. A rumor you hear may not be true.

**Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** Your partner's arrogance may be giving you fits. Be patient, but stick with what you know is right.

**Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20).** There's a very difficult task ahead. You may even have to get a tutor to help you complete the assignment. Don't believe everything you hear.

**If You're Having a Birthday This Week:** Handle finances this year, and you'll prosper! Don't, and you won't.

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## PERKY & BEANZ by Russell Myers



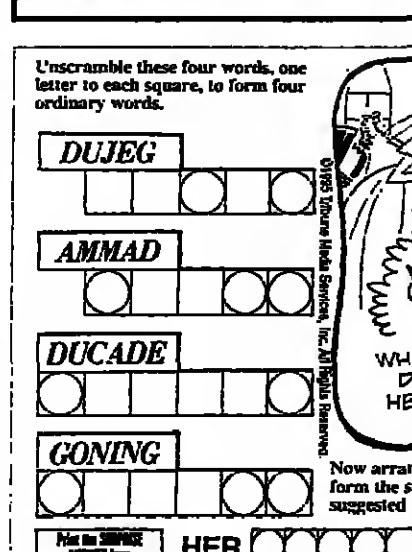
## ELWOOD by Ben Templeton & Tom Forman



## CATFISH by Fred Wagner & Tom Cone



## Unscramble these four words, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

HER

Answers: JUDGE MADAM ADDUCE NOGIN

© 1996, Tribune Media Services

## SLAPSTIX

What we have to learn to do, we learn by doing!

## Words of Wisdom



Life without a friend, death without a witness.

It is not so much our friends' help that helps us as the confident knowledge that they will help us.

Friendship may, and often does, grow into love, but love never subsides into friendship.

Life is to be fortified by many friendships. To love, and to be loved, is the greatest happiness of existence.

Don't go to visit a friend in the hour of his disgrace.

He makes no friend who never made a foe.

Circumstance may guide lives, but how people deal with it is their true measure.

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## Bridge

Nine Tricks — Count 'em

By Tannah Hirsch

Both vulnerable. North deals.

**NORTH**

AK

AK 762

AK 1095

AK 83

**WEST**

Q 754

98

763

Q J 52

**EAST**

63

Q J 103

Q K 842

107

**SOUTH**

J 10982

54

J

AK 964

The bidding:

North East South West

1♥ Pass 1♠ Pass

2♦ Pass 2NT Pass

3NT Pass Pass

Opening lead: Seven of C

Don't fret if you have not yet mastered the art of the compound squeeze — you might go the rest of your life without coming across one. Concentrate on something as simple as counting your tricks and become a winning player!

Since a three-club rebid would be game forcing and could land the partnership in deep trouble on a hand that had all the earmarks of a misfit, South had to choose between two hearts and two no trump on the second round. The good spade intermediates and strong club holding swayed responder to the latter, and North had ample to go on to game.

West led a top-of-nothing diamond and declarer, who had just completed reading an article on positional tenaces, seized the opportunity to play low from dummy and set up such an animal. East's queen won and back came the ten of clubs. It made no difference whether declarer ducked or won. The best South could do now was come to eight tricks since the defenders would play another club on regaining the lead, severing communications to the closed hand.

Now let's see what happens if declarer counts tricks before playing a single card. South is entitled to four spade tricks once the queen is forced out, two hearts, one diamond and two clubs — nine in all.

All declarer has to do is win the ace of diamonds at trick one, cash the ace and king of spades, then come to hand with the king of clubs to drive out the queen of spades. As long as declarer plays high on the next diamond lead, the defenders are helpless since the ace of clubs is the entry to the good spades.

## WORD WISE

Q: What is a prolepsis? I understand it's a figure of speech like a simile, but I don't remember learning about it.

A: It's more a literary device you probably wouldn't see much today, which accounts for your lapse. It sets up a rhetorical situation using an adjective applied to a noun to foresee an event by referring to it as if it already took place. Theodore Bernstein uses this example from Robert Browning: "You're wounded." "Nay, I'm killed, Sir!" Smiling, the boy fell dead."

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# Le Jourdain

Supplément en français du Star

## La France prête à s'engager au Sud-Liban

● La France s'est déclarée prête à apporter une contribution «concrète et matérielle» pour garantir la paix au Liban-Sud dans l'éventualité d'un retrait israélien. A l'issue d'un entretien avec son homologue libanais Fares Bouez, le ministre français des Affaires étrangères, Hervé De Charette, a déclaré mardi que les propositions françaises, loin d'être rejetées, avaient reçu un écho favorable auprès des autorités libanaises. Fares Bouez a ensuite confirmé que M. De Charette l'avait informé que la France était prête à s'engager, avec l'accord des différents protagonistes à conflit, dans une opération de maintien de la paix au Sud-Liban. Jeudi dernier, la porte-parole du président Jacques Chirac avait déjà précisé que la France acceptait de participer à toute opération ayant pour but de garantir la paix entre Israël, la Syrie et le Liban si tel était le souhait de toutes les parties.



## Elections

# Les Palestiniens choisissent leurs voix

Pour la première fois se dérouleront samedi des élections générales dans les territoires autonomes palestiniens. Décisif dans le processus d'autonomie palestinien, ce scrutin ne comporte pas de grande surprise, la majorité des candidats étant des sympathisants de Yasser Arafat.

**Samedi sera** une nouvelle étape de l'autonomie palestinienne: plus d'un million d'électeurs sont appelés aux urnes pour les premières élections générales. Il s'agit d'élire un Conseil de l'autonomie et son président le 20 janvier, sous observation internationale. 88 élus devraient prendre en mains le destin des habitants des Territoires occupés depuis 1967. Pour ce scrutin rassemblant 676 candidats, seulement 28 femmes se présentent, soit 4% des candidats.

La décision de tenir les élections à cette date est le fruit de longues et épineuses négociations entre le gouvernement israélien et l'Organisation de libération de la Palestine. Pour les Israéliens, il s'agissait d'un simple conseil administratif de seize personnes ayant pour tâche d'appliquer la politique israélienne, en quelque sorte.

Quant aux Palestiniens, ils voyaient dans ce conseil un instrument législatif composé de 186 élus.

Entre ces deux chiffres, 16 et 186, Israéliens et Palestiniens sont tombés d'accord sur 87 sièges au Conseil palestinien. Sans préciser s'il s'agit d'un conseil administratif ou législatif. C'est «l'ambiguïté construc-

tive», encore une fois, qui régit les relations entre les protagonistes, comme l'a dit un responsable américain voilà des années.

Un siège supplémentaire est réservé aux Juifs palestiniens, cette minorité juive de Samariens à Naplouse, pour affirmer le caractère d'unité nationale de l'ensemble du peuple palestinien. La consultation était prévue pour avril mais elle a été avancée parce qu'elle est liée au redéploiement des forces israéliennes de la Cisjordanie qui se poursuit avec élan.

Ce sont les premières élections générales. Il y avait eu auparavant des élections syndicales ou associatives en Palestine ou à l'extérieur, dont les représentants siègent au Conseil national palestinien. En 1976, les autorités israéliennes d'occupation avaient laissé se dérouler des élections municipales dans les villes de Cisjordanie en pensant que ce scrutin allait amener une direction hostile à l'O.L.P.

Le résultat fut contraire: 96 élus étaient partisans de la centrale palestinienne.

Il s'agissait dans la période passant d'un vote politique où les compétences

professionnelles étaient quasiment ignorées. Aujourd'hui, même si l'objectif de libération nationale des Palestiniens est loin d'être atteint, l'accent politique n'est plus majeur dans les slogans électoraux. D'une part parce que les bases du Conseil sont garanties par les accords d'Oslo pour une période transitoire. D'autre part, parce que les soucis des citoyens palestiniens sont aujourd'hui d'ordre économique après plus de 28 années d'occupation qui ont détruit toute infrastructure.

**Le réveil des grandes familles**

Par ailleurs, la société palestinienne est en train d'assister à un réveil du phénomène des grandes familles, des clans, qui avait été gelé tout au long des années de la révolution armée et de la lutte populaire, pendant la lutte armée et l'Intifada. Durant cette période, tout signe familial était absent. Ce qui comptait était plus la contribution au combat.

Toute la société palestinienne est impliquée aujourd'hui dans les élections. Les réunions, les consultations et les campagnes se succèdent. Toutes les forces sont concernées, y compris l'opposition.

Si le mouvement de la résistance islamique, le Hamas, refuse de participer au scrutin, il s'est engagé à ne pas le perturber.

Il en est de même pour le F.D.L.P. de Georges Habbache, dont le bureau politique a pris la ferme décision à Damas de boycotter les élections.

Nous des personnalités du F.D.L.P. ont déjà officiellement annoncé leur candidature. Quant au principal mouvement de l'O.L.P., le Fatah, des débats internes se poursuivent depuis des semaines pour désigner les candidats. Des élections internes s'étant même déroulées dans certaines localités.

Les premiers résultats ont exprimé un mécontentement de la base du Fatah, vis-à-vis de sa direction historique. Pour les autres partis, leur participation est acquise depuis un moment. D'après toutes les estimations, les Palestiniens se préparent à se rendre en masse aux urnes des 1696 bureaux de vote installés en Cisjordanie et à Gaza. Une participation massive qui renforcerait encore l'Autorité palestinienne. Car c'est le passage de la légitimité révolutionnaire à la légitimité normale constitutionnelle qui constitue la première base d'un prochain Etat palestinien indépendant.

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## Pas d'inquiétude pour Yasser Arafat

Pour Yasser Arafat, chef de l'O.L.P., l'élection à la présidence de l'exécutif palestinien semble être une simple formalité tant les sondages le donnent favori.

Parmi les 676 candidats en lice, seule une femme, Samiha Khalil, fait figure de concurrente.

Agée de 72 ans, Samiha Khalil jouit d'une grande popularité dans les Territoires autonomes après près de quarante années de lutte contre l'occupation israélienne. Elle est d'ailleurs résolument opposée aux accords d'Oslo et refuse l'abrogation des articles de la Charte de l'O.L.P. appelant à la destruction d'Israël, estimant que l'Etat hébreu continue à détruire les Palestiniens.

Si elle affirme pouvoir obtenir 40 % des voix, l'écart avec Yasser Arafat devrait être beaucoup plus important. A sa décharge, il faut reconnaître qu'elle n'a eu que peu l'occasion de s'exprimer dans les médias ces dernières semaines. Selon un rapport de Reporters sans frontières qui note un «déficit médiatique» dans les médias entre les deux principaux candidats, Yasser Arafat aurait notamment bénéficié de 64 minutes d'antenne à la télévision palestinienne entre le 2 et le 9 janvier, contre seulement 13 secondes pour Samiha Khalil.

Il en est de même pour les médias d'Etat israéliens sur lesquels Yasser Arafat a obtenu deux fois plus de temps d'antenne que Samiha Khalil.

Il n'a pas, par exemple, à souffrir des embouteillages étouffants dans les rues de la ville et peut se permettre de dépasser à toute allure les voitures et les camions sous des regards admiratifs et respectueux.

Il n'a pas besoin d'aller travailler à une heure précise et n'a pas à organiser son emploi du temps. Tout est prêt et organisé, même ses déclarations pour les médias.

Il peut beaucoup voyager et découvrir les pays du monde sans être soutenu par des foules ou aux interrogatoires que font subir les douaniers ou les policiers.

Il peut donner des ordres et tout le monde s'adresse à lui en l'appelant «le chef», une exclamation qui devient une vedette. Sa photo paraît dans tous les journaux et ses commentaires sont plus diffusés que les chansons de Madonna ou de Michael Jackson.

Quand il décide de boycotter le café parce que son prix est trop élevé, la population l'approuve pour son attitude extraordinaire.

Et s'il adopte une politique qui n'est pas populaire, il est excusé parce que, de toute façon, ce n'est pas de sa faute.

Une fois que son gouvernement a démissionné et qu'il n'est plus ministre, il continue à toucher son salaire pour le restant de ses jours. De plus il peut, en tant qu'ancien ministre, critiquer les politiques du gouvernement sans craindre d'être attaqué ou condamné.

Alors n'ayez pas honte de rêver d'être un jour ministre. Restez auprès de votre téléphone: un coup de fil pourrait réaliser tous vos rêves.

Sa'eda Kilani

Le projet de loi sur l'enfance rédigé récemment par le ministère du Développement social a provoqué la réaction de différentes organisations militantes pour les droits des enfants. Pour elles, cette loi, longtemps attendue, manque de rigueur, ainsi que de profondeur.

C'est effectivement une initiative positive qu'a prise le ministère. Cependant, elle exige plus d'études pour définir les différents droits des enfants, estime Asma Khader, avocate et présidente de l'Union des femmes jordaniennes. «Ce projet de loi concerne la moitié de la population, 41% des Jordaniens ayant moins de quinze ans».

Cette ébauche de loi sur l'enfance ne répond pas à toutes les attentes. «Pourquoi ce projet de loi sur l'enfance alors que l'on peut adopter une loi sur les droits des enfants qui porte un sens plus large et qui aborde des sujets plus vastes», s'interroge Suleimane Sweiss, docteur en sociologie.

«La loi proposée minimise les droits des enfants».

Elle permet notamment de décider pour les orphelins, les enfants dont les parents sont inconnus, ou ceux qui sont maltraités, de les séparer ou non de leurs familles. Elle donne au ministre du Développement social, ou aux personnes qu'il nomme, le droit de tout décider pour les enfants. «Pourquoi n'y aurait-il pas un comité de spécialistes pour étudier les cas, écouter les enfants et rendre des jugements plus justes?» se demande Asma Khader.

«Séparer un enfant de sa famille pour le rattacher à une autre famille n'est pas une décision facile à prendre pour un juge, pour le ministère du Développement social ou pour des spécialistes», explique Nazieh Hamdi, formatrice d'éducateurs spécialisés.

La loi en vigueur concernant l'enfance dépend du droit public, ce que le nouveau projet de loi est censé modifier en le rattachant au droit privé afin d'avoir la priorité d'application.

Un comité sans spécialistes

Pour prendre des décisions juridiques ayant un impact considérable sur la vie des enfants, il ne faut pas mésestimer l'importance des spécialistes. La loi à l'étude propose la création d'un comité, le Comité du conseil supérieur, qui aura un rôle administratif.

Il sera notamment chargé de proposer des politiques nationales à propos de l'éducation, d'organiser les programmes entre les différents organismes s'occupant de la santé, de recevoir les plaintes des enfants maltraités et de les diriger vers

des spécialistes.

Ce comité se compose du ministre du Développement social, Salwa el Masri, du secrétaire général du ministère du Développement social, celui de l'Éducation, de la Santé, de la Culture, du représentant de l'Union des associations bénévoles, de la caisse de la reine Alia et de la fondation Nour el Hussein. «Où sont les spécialistes ici?» tempête Asma Khader.

Désité par la famille royale, un autre comité réunira la semaine prochaine des spécialistes, des associations privées et publiques nationales et internationales souhaitant collaborer pour l'amélioration des conditions de vie des enfants.

«Il faut intensifier nos efforts pour avoir une seule voix solide en faveur des enfants», explique Dana Toukan, employée au Bureau de la reine Nour.

Lors du colloque organisé la semaine dernière à Amman par l'Union des femmes jordaniennes, ce projet de loi a été



Selon de nombreuses associations, le gouvernement ne tient pas assez compte de l'avis des spécialistes dans son projet de loi sur l'enfance.

«C'est indispensable d'avoir une loi pour mettre fin à l'abus continu des droits des enfants», ajoute Nazieh Hamdi. «On a forcément besoin d'une coopération entre le ministère du Développement social et celui de la Justice, ainsi que de la présence de spécialistes de l'éducation des enfants dans les universités».

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jugé décevant par la plupart des participants. «Comme si notre travail pendant les cinq dernières années était éparpillé», commente Mme Nazeh représentant de l'Unicef.

Tous sont tombés d'accord pour proposer un nouveau projet au pouvoir législatif. Et au mois de mars, une conférence intitulée «La loi sur l'enfance: état des lieux et propositions» se tiendra à Amman afin de permettre aux enfants de bénéficier de droits plus justes.

Les opposants à ce projet loi peuvent en effet encore espérer le faire évoluer, car comme le reconnaît Khalil al Banna, directeur de l'Information et du ministère du Développement social: «celui qui publie l'ébauche dans les journaux officiels, alors que ce projet n'est pas encore défini, a causé des remarques continuelles que font beaucoup de gens».

Oroub El Abed

## «La liberté de la presse est utopique dans le monde arabe»

Pour Riyad Ben Fadhel, rédacteur en chef du Monde diplomatique en arabe, la liberté d'expression a régressé dans les médias des pays arabes ces dernières années.

A l'initiative de l'Unesco et des Nations Unies, un séminaire s'est penché la semaine dernière sur l'état de la promotion de l'indépendance et du pluralisme des médias des pays arabes. Pendant quatre jours, les participants ont notamment débattu de la formation des journalistes ou de la question de la censure.

Riyad Ben Fadhel, rédacteur en chef du Monde diplomatique en arabe, décrit la situation dans laquelle se trouvent les médias des pays arabes.

Quel est l'état de l'indépendance de la presse dans les pays arabes?

La situation des libertés démocratiques, et donc des libertés d'expression et d'opinion, est peut-être, sans vouloir être pessimiste, dans le monde arabe, là où on connaît le plus de problèmes.

À l'exception près de quelques unités tentatives d'ouverture politique qui sont liées à une ambiance générale et à des pressions internationales, la liberté de la presse, la liberté d'expression et d'opinion dans le monde arabe, restent en deçà du minimum requis dans l'importance quelle société civile du monde.

Quelle explication peut-on donner à cela?

Les traditions de société civile et de démocratie dans le monde arabe sont en deçà des traditions européennes ou anglo-saxonnes. La pratique des partis au pouvoir reste une pratique quasiment privée.

Le pouvoir est géré comme un bien privé, et l'accès des citoyens aux responsabilités de l'Etat reste grandement régenté par des oligarchies qui sont encore imprégnées de réflexes d'avant la guerre froide, et parfois même de réflexes tribaux ou d'antiquités qui n'ont pas connu d'évolution fondamentale en terme d'économie, d'ouverture.

Quelles sont les principales difficultés rencontrées par les médias arabes?

Le problème le plus direct, c'est qu'aujourd'hui aucun journaliste arabe ne peut se targuer d'être libre. Ce qu'il a envie d'écrire, quand ce n'est pas pour des raisons intérieures d'un pays qui est complètement autoritaire, on peut à tout moment justifier des intérêts diplomatiques du pays en question pour empêcher d'écrire sur l'international.

Et lorsqu'elle n'est pas directe, la censure s'exerce sur le promoteur du journal dans le cas de journaux dits indépendants, c'est-à-dire appartenant à des groupes privés non directement liés à l'Etat. Cela peut se traduire par une suspension du droit d'importation du papier, une transformation du dépôt légal. Les moyens d'enlever la liberté d'expression sont multiformes et aussi évolués que la technologie de l'information.

La privatisation des médias n'offrirait-elle pas tout de même plus d'indépendance?

La privatisation des médias ou l'intervention de groupes étrangers sont l'une des solutions. Mais ce n'est pas la panacée. La plupart des groupes privés ne sont pas autonomes et tirent leur profit d'opérations avec l'Etat.

Ce qu'il faut c'est avant tout travailler à la formation des journalistes. Ils doivent refuser d'être des gens qui ne signent jamais leurs papiers. Le monde arabe est la zone du monde où l'on voit le plus grand nombre de papiers non signés.

Un journaliste digne de ce nom doit être capable de faire un travail d'investigation. En capitalisant une information et en refusant pour la mettre en valeur, il refusera de voir cette information passer à la trappe.

Les libertés d'expression ne se sont-elles pas encore dégradées ces dernières années?

Il faut être franc et direct. Depuis l'intervention atlantiste dans la guerre du Golfe qui s'est faite sous le motif noble de mettre fin à l'occupation d'un pays et de provoquer un changement démocratique dans la région, la situation des libertés

démocratiques, aussi mauvaises étaient elles à la veille de la guerre du Golfe, s'est détériorée.

Dans tous les pays arabes, la situation des libertés d'expression et d'opinion est en recul manifeste d'une manière nette et claire.

L'autre élément encore plus pervers est que la dynamique de la répression au nom de l'occupation israélienne, qui était un moyen de censure très pervers, s'est substitué aujourd'hui par deux vecteurs. D'une part la lutte contre l'islamisme qui s'est développée et de justification, et d'autre part la question de la paix.

L'antagonisme avec Israël a donné des potentialités extraordinaires aux censeurs pour frapper la presse et aujourd'hui, la dynamique de la paix donne à ces mêmes censeurs des moyens pour frapper la liberté de la presse.

En ce qui est dramatique, c'est de voir que l'autorité nationale palestinienne, en qui tout le monde a fondé des espoirs énormes, reproduit les mêmes schémas que d'autres pays arabes.

Peut-on, dans ces conditions, espérer voir un jour se développer une réelle liberté de la presse?

L'absence de structures démocratiques, de tradition démocratique, de liberté et de droit d'expression des citoyens fait que la liberté de la presse est utopique dans le monde arabe.

Ceci dit, c'est peut-être par le combat des journalistes, des groupes de presse arabes qui commencent à connaître un certain rayonnement, que l'on peut contribuer à développer une conception démocratique de la presse qui elle-même permettra de développer une conception démocratique de la société.

Il est illusoire de parler de solution idéale. Il faut aller vers le moins mauvais possible. Nous sommes condamnés à ce choix tant que les régimes arabes sont ce qu'ils sont.

Prochainement par François Petitdemange

## SELON L'OM

La seule nouvelle qui ne se démode jamais en Jordanie est l'anticipation d'un remaniement ministériel. Même au moment de la formation d'un nouveau gouvernement, les premières analyses révèlent déjà l'incohérence du cabinet et anticipent son effondrement à cause de son incapacité à assumer les responsabilités ou gérer les problèmes importants.

En fait, les Jordaniens ne se montrent jamais satisfaits de la composition finale d'un gouvernement. A chaque fois, ils pensent qu'un ministre pourrait être remplacé par un autre, ou que le gouvernement devrait inclure tel ou tel ministre.

Mais leur intérêt pour ces remaniements ministériels n'est guidé que par une chose: leur espoir de devenir un jour ministre. Et ceux qui se reconnaissent pas vouloir devenir un jour ministre ne disent pas la vérité.

Car le ministre ne jouit pas simplement de tous les privilèges qui font partie de sa fonction. Il profite aussi de tous ceux que lui offre la société.

Il n'a pas, par exemple, à souffrir des embouteillages étouffants dans les rues de la ville et peut se permettre de dépasser à toute allure les voitures et les camions sous des regards admiratifs et respectueux.

Il n'a pas besoin d'aller travailler à une heure précise et n'a pas à organiser son emploi du temps. Tout est prêt et organisé, même ses déclarations pour les médias.

Il peut beaucoup voyager et découvrir les pays du monde sans être soutenu par des foules ou aux interrogatoires que font subir les douaniers ou les policiers.

Il peut donner des ordres et tout le monde s'adresse à lui en l'appelant «le chef», une exclamation qui devient une vedette. Sa photo paraît dans tous les journaux et ses commentaires sont plus diffusés que les chansons de Madonna ou de Michael Jackson.

Quand il décide de boycotter le café parce que son prix est trop élevé, la population l'approuve pour son attitude extraordinaire.

Et s'il adopte une politique qui n'est pas populaire, il est excusé parce que, de toute façon, ce n'est pas de sa faute.

Une fois que son gouvernement a démissionné et qu'il n'est plus ministre, il continue à toucher son salaire pour le restant de ses jours. De plus il peut, en tant qu'ancien ministre, critiquer les politiques du gouvernement sans craindre d'être attaqué ou condamné.

Alors n'ayez pas honte de rêver d'être un jour ministre. Restez auprès de votre téléphone: un coup de fil pourrait réaliser tous vos rêves.

Sa'eda Kilani

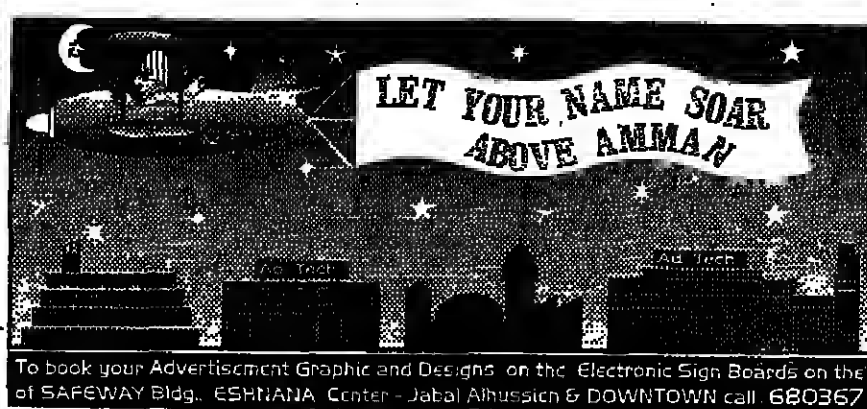
Le Jourdain, on y revient

Tous les jeudis dans le



## Activities

Arts Centre	6610267	Concord Cinema	677420
Arts Library	820101	Plaza Cinema	609238
Arts Centre	6361478	Philadelphia Cinema	634144
Arts Centre	637009		
Arts Institute	641993	<b>Sports Clubs</b>	
Arts Institute (Spanish)	610858	Al Hussein Sports City	667181
Arts Cultural Centre	639777	Orthodox Club	810491
Arts Centre	665195	Royal Automobile Club	815410
Arts Centre	641793	Royal Shooting Club	736572
Arts Centre	664251	Royal Chess Club	673713
Arts Centre	643252	Royal Racing Club	09-801233
Arts Gallery	639303	Jordan Bridge Club	676990
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Awqaf & Islamic Affairs .....	666141	Planning .....	644466
Culture / Jabal Amman .....	636391	Post & Communications .....	624301
Education & Higher Education .....	669181	Public Health .....	665131
Energy & Mineral Resources .....	815615	Public Works & Housing .....	668481
Finance .....	636321	Social Development .....	673191
Foreign Affairs .....	644361	Supplies .....	602121
Industry & Trade .....	663191	Tourism & Antiquities .....	642311
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Czech	671813666135
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Thai Airways	657195
Trans World Airline	623430
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Queen Alia Airport	(08) 53200
RJ Flight Info.	(08) 53200

### **Important Numbers**

## Emergencies

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